

he
ct
of
d

MID-AMERICA

An Historical Review

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 3

JULY 1949

MID-AMERICA

An Historical Review

JULY 1949

VOLUME 31

NEW SERIES, VOLUME 20

NUMBER 3

CONTENTS

THE EARLY THEATRE IN THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY . . . <i>Harold and Ernestine Briggs</i>	131
THE YAKIMA CAMPAIGN OF 1856 . . . <i>William N. Bischoff, S.J.</i>	163
DOCUMENTS	170
JEAN DELANGLEZ—IN MEMORIAM . . . <i>Jerome V. Jacobsen</i>	209
NOTES AND COMMENTS	213

MANAGING EDITOR

JEROME V. JACOBSEN, *Chicago*

EDITORIAL STAFF

WILLIAM STETSON MERRILL

J. MANUEL ESPINOSA

W. EUGENE SHIELS

RAPHAEL HAMILTON

PAUL KINIERY

Published quarterly by Loyola University (The Institute of Jesuit History) at 50 cents a copy. Annual subscription, \$2.00; in foreign countries, \$2.50. Publication and editorial offices at Loyola University, 6525 Sheridan Road, Chicago, Illinois. All communications should be addressed to the Managing Editor. Entered as second class matter, August 7, 1929, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry as second class matter at the post office at Effingham, Illinois. Printed in the United States.

MID-AMERICA

An Historical Review

JULY 1949

VOLUME 31

NEW SERIES, VOLUME 20

NUMBER 3

The Early Theatre in the Upper Mississippi Valley

In the nineteenth century as the frontier line of settlement moved westward across the American continent, one of the first of the arts to gain a foothold was the drama. The theatre was a vital force on the frontier, and no phase of social life was more colorful or more closely related to the constantly changing background as the tide of population flowed westward.¹ While some denounced the theatre with vehemence, others used any means at hand to establish an institution for which they felt a definite need.² In some regions theatrical activity first appeared when amateur societies were organized by local citizens, while in others it was introduced by groups of strolling thespians.³ In some areas where the pioneer population was rough and restless, theatricals first appeared in the form of crude variety entertainment, to be succeeded later by the legitimate drama. The term "drama" was used broadly at that time, and a statement by Walter Prichard Eaton conveys the interpretation commonly ac-

¹ Noah M. Ludlow, *Dramatic Life as I Found It*, St. Louis, 1880, 2. Ludlow, the well-known actor-manager who took his companies into many pioneer regions, brings out the significance of frontier thespians and their activities.

² *Ibid.*, 268. Here Ludlow indicates the keen interest of the pioneer in entertainment: "The first adventurers to a new country are generally bold and active spirits, with an unbounded desire of novelty and excitement. Such have besides a considerable amount of romance in their natures, and take hold of the ideal with an eager though rude grasp."

³ James E. Murdock, *The Stage, or Recollections of Actors and Acting from an Experience of Fifty Years. A Series of Dramatic Sketches*, Philadelphia, 1880, 414-415. The west was looked upon as an excellent place for ambitious players to gain experience. Murdock termed it "that professional school for youthful thespians..." Many examples of the optimism of the frontier and of pioneer thespians are found in Solomon Smith, *The Theatrical Apprenticeship and Anecdotal Recollections of Sol. Smith, Comedian, Attorney at Law*, Philadelphia, 1847, 102-113.

cepted: "The theatre is wherever anybody gets up before a public and entertains them by pretending."⁴

Early in 1834 Charles Fenno Hoffman, from the state of New York, traveling in the upper Mississippi Valley, arrived at Prairie du Chien, where he wrote a letter dated February 12, in which he told of attending a theatre at Fort Crawford. At the town tavern a mile from the fort he was greeted by the landlord, a portly, soldier-like German, who bowed him into a large room heated to suffocation by a Canadian stove, and placed in his hand a "strip of newly written paper." Hoffman was much surprised to find that it was a playbill "respectfully informing the public that the sterling English comedy *Who Wants a Guinea?* and Fielding's afterpiece of *Don Quixote in England*, with songs, recitations, etc.," would be presented that evening by the soldiers of the first regiment at Fort Crawford.⁵

Arriving at the fort after supper, the writer tells of handing the ticket which had been furnished him by the landlord to a soldier acting as doorkeeper. He then entered a "large barrack-like room" fitted up as a theatre by the soldiers, with well arranged scenery and lights ingeniously placed in bayonets. The seats, gradually elevated like the pit of a theatre, were arranged to divide the audience into three sections: one for the officers, with their families, another for the soldiers, and a third for the "gumboes", Indians, and a few Negro servants. When Hoffman arrived, the play was in progress, and the audience was so intent upon it that he waited until the act was finished to take his seat, one offered him by an officer in the more favored part of the house. Hoffman expressed much surprise at the skill and judgment with which the soldier-thespians played their parts.⁶

Continuing his travels Hoffman went down river to Galena, Illinois, a lead-mining center. There he wrote a second letter on February 22, 1834, in which he told of witnessing another play in a theatre less pretentious than the one at Fort Crawford. Arriving in town during the early evening he found the tavern deserted and upon inquiry as to the cause learned that there was "a play to be acted in town" that night. Directed to the place of the performance, he found it to be "the upper part of an unfinished house on the side

⁴ Walter Prichard Eaton, *The Actor's Heritage, Scenes from the Theatre of Yesterday and the Day Before*, Boston, 1924, 44.

⁵ Charles Fenno Hoffman, *A Winter in the West, By a New Yorker*, New York, 1835, I, 1-4.

⁶ Thespian societies were common in western army posts during the nineteenth century. Where women were not available men played the female parts.

of a hill." He told of entering the building, and, since the first floor was not completed, making his way along a narrow plank laid on naked beams to a rude staircase. The lower part of the building was used as a stable, and at the time was occupied by horses. Going up the stairway "leading to the histrionic realms" in the upper story, Hoffman entered the rough unfinished room which served as a theatre.⁷

The company consisted of four adults and a ten-year-old child. These apparently strolling thespians were presenting a melodrama, *The Woodman's Hut*, and in spite of the crude surroundings and poor acting, the audience was enthusiastic, showering half-dollars "like peas upon the stage to express its delight at the little girl's dancing between acts." In one of the intermissions, Hoffman, who happened to be standing in the first story, was startled when a heavy missile passed through the air not far from his head. The mystery was cleared up when a little Negro, dropping hurriedly to the entrance from the "Thespian Hall" above, asked him if he had seen a gun come by. One of the actors, attempting to stand the gun in the corner, had let it slip through an opening in the planks of the floor.⁸

Galena was also visited in 1839 by the McKenzie-Jefferson Dramatic Company,⁹ a troupe of able players, who made a barnstorming trip through parts of Illinois and Iowa. On the first lap of their journey they had traveled by the lake route to open a theatre in Chicago, where, after a short season, they moved on to Galena. The actors traveled in open wagons, their trunks serving as most uncomfortable seats as the tired horses drew the jolting vehicles over muddy and rutted roads. They stopped at farm houses and rude taverns for refreshments, often playing in these or in barns, with candles for lighting. The company offered a short season in Galena, going from there to Dubuque in the newly formed Territory of Iowa.

According to Charles A. Krone, in February, 1858, a theatrical company consisting of twelve actors and an orchestra of six pieces

⁷ A wide variety of places were used for theatrical purposes. For example, Albany, New York, in the early nineteenth century used a barn, a hospital, a dancing hall, the Thespian Hotel, and finally a permanent theatre; see William A. Dunlap, *A History of the American Theatre*, New York, 1832, 32, and Charles Lowell Lees, "An Introductory Study of the American People of the 18th Century Through Their Drama and Theatrical History," doctoral thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1934, 28, 34-37.

⁸ Hoffman, *A Winter in the West*, II, 50-51.

⁹ This was Joseph Jefferson, Sr., and his brother-in-law, Alexander McKenzie, who formed the Illinois Theatrical Company that played seasons in Chicago in 1838 and 1839 and took to the road between times; Bessie L. Pierce, *A History of Chicago*, New York, 1937, I, 310.

was playing in a large hall in Quincy, Illinois, on the banks of the Mississippi River. The hall in which this company performed was on the floor of a brick building on Hampshire Street not far from the public square. It had a stage "of respectable size," and the prices of admission were 35, 25, and 15 cents. The company offered the popular plays of that day to large audiences who seemed pleased with the repertoire and the ability of the individual actors.¹⁰

Theatricals and amusements related to the theatre were not plentiful in the towns of frontier Iowa in the thirties, although there had been some activity. The Lafayette Circus Company from New York had given several performances at Dubuque to large and enthusiastic audiences, and a menagerie of wild animals had been exhibited in the various Mississippi River settlements. A few strolling magicians, singers, dancers, gymnasts, acrobats and mimics, had presented programs in the dining rooms of taverns at Burlington, Davenport, and Bloomington (Muscatine), but their appearances had been at long intervals.

In the river town of Dubuque early in 1838 a group of young men who wished to satisfy their interest in the drama, as well as to relieve the monotony of a long Iowa winter, organized the Iowa Thespian Association, probably the first amateur dramatic organization in the Iowa area. The newly organized society made arrangements to use the "large upstairs room" of the recently constructed Shakespeare Coffee House and Free Admission News Room owned and operated by Charles Corkey.¹¹ A stage was erected across one corner of the room at an elevation of three or four feet from the floor, seats were provided, and the scenic artist furnished colorful scenery and a drop curtain. The organization named its playhouse Shakespeare Hall.¹²

The ambitious amateur thespians of Dubuque met in Shakespeare Hall during the winter months to rehearse their plays and songs. Some of their offerings were such dramas as *Pizzaro* and *England's Iron Days*, and, according to the press, many of the roles were "admirably played, and all the plays were well received and applauded." Numerous national and sentimental songs were offered by a young

¹⁰ Charles A. Krone, "Recollections of an Old Actor," *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, Volume 3 (1911), 275.

¹¹ *The Iowa News*, November 15, 1837, carried an advertisement stating that the Coffee House provided "free use of legislative and congressional proceedings and newspapers from all parts of the Union, Canada and Texas, as well as access to a superior and well selected assortment of wines, liquors and cordials at the bar 'cash up'."

¹² Bruce E. Mahan, "The Iowa Thespians," *The Palimpsest*, January, 1923, 14-15; Joseph S. Schick, *The Early Theatre in Eastern Iowa*, Chicago, 1939, Appendix I, 177-180.

gentleman whom the editor of the *Iowa News* thought possessed musical powers, which, "if cultivated, bid fair to rival the best vocalists of the day." Shakespeare Hall was highly recommended to all lovers of the drama as a place to spend some very profitable winter evenings.¹³

Probably the most pretentious offering of the Dubuque thespians during their first season was a patriotic melodrama in five acts, entitled *The Glory of Columbia, Her Yoemanry*, written by William Dunlap. Advertised in the *News* of February 24 to be presented on Monday evening, February 26, the play was to be concluded with "a variety of songs, duets, and trios." Children under ten years of age were not to be admitted, and tickets were on sale at the bar of the Shakespeare. The performance attracted such a crowd that it was impossible for all to gain admittance, and loud applause greeted the drop of the curtain at the end of each act.¹⁴ The play was repeated the following Saturday night with the addition of an afterpiece, *Gretna Green*. The thespians found their first season so successful that they made plans for an even more extensive repertoire for the following one.¹⁵

The second season was made significant because of the visit of the McKenzie-Jefferson Company, the first visit of a troupe of professional actors who had acquired some reputation in the east, to the newly created Territory of Iowa. Traveling on sleighs on the ice of the frozen Mississippi River from Galena, the company reached the town safely, although their baggage, properties, and scenery had been on a sleigh which had broken through and were thoroughly soaked. The opening of Shakespeare Hall was delayed until the wardrobe could be dried out and the scenery touched up. The halls and bedrooms of the tavern where the company stopped were strung with clotheslines upon which were hung Roman shirts, tights, gilded pasteboard helmets, and numerous other articles, some ruined beyond repair.

The McKenzie-Jefferson company played an eleven night engagement, offering such popular plays as *Othello*, *Rob Roy*, *Richard III*, *The Lady of Lyons* and *Camille*, with typical afterpieces such as *The Waterman* and *How to Rule a Wife*. The audience responded with enthusiasm to juvenile roles and singing by young Joseph Jefferson and his sister. Each evening at six-thirty the curtain rose to a crowded house, where for three and a half hours a varied program

¹³ *The Iowa News*, February 3, 24, 1838.

¹⁴ One writer has suggested that frequent visits to the bar between acts no doubt helped to accentuate the enthusiasm of some spectators.

¹⁵ Mahan, "The Iowa Thespians," 17-18.

was offered. Admission prices were a dollar for adults and half price for children. So entranced was the audience that "even the property man who replaced the burned down candle footlights between the big show and the afterpiece received his share of applause."¹⁶

The Dubuque engagement had been so highly successful both from the standpoint of finances and that of appreciative audiences that the troupe well pleased with the results left the town to play in other river settlements down the Mississippi. But in spite of amateur efforts and the visits of a good professional company, emphasis on theatricals declined in the early forties and the Iowa Thespian Association apparently disbanded. Shakespeare Hall was closed to the patrons of the drama, although the tap room on the floor below with its free reading room continued to dispense liquid cheer. No longer could one obtain "a ticket . . . to see Nightengale and his mummers tear a passion to tatters or portray comedy with the broad strokes then so popular."¹⁷

In the 1850's theatrical entertainment increased, reaching a high point when, on August 31, 1857, a playhouse called the People's Theatre was opened on the second floor of the Odd Fellow's building on the corner of Bluff and Eighth Streets. The drop curtain, the ceiling and the boxes had been lavishly ornamented, and as usual local reports boasted that the town now had "one of the handsomest [theatres] in the west, the finest . . . of its kind outside of New York City," and that "neither Chicago nor St. Louis possessed [one] so well equipped and arranged."¹⁸

Miss Eliza Logan had been booked for the opening night, but when she failed to arrive a member of the regular company played her role in the opening play, *Evadne*. Miss Logan arrived for the next performance, playing Julia in *The Hunchback*, in which according to the local press "the inhabitants of the wilderness" gave her a reception she must have long remembered. She rewarded them by playing in, *The School for Scandal* and *The Lady of Lyons*. When

¹⁶ *The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson*, New York, 1897, *passim*.

¹⁷ Mahan, "The Iowa Thespians," 23-24. While little attention was paid to the legitimate drama in the forties, Dubuque had its quota of magicians, lecturers, and general entertainers, circuses and menageries, although records regarding these are fragmentary and incomplete.

¹⁸ The playhouse had been decorated by Samuel W. Gulick, a scenic artist of ability, who had painted on the drop curtain a copy of Cole's "Voyage of Life." The proscenium had been decorated and topped by two large eagles done in stucco casts. It was reported that \$5,000 had been expended in fitting the theatre, with an added \$1,000 invested in scenery; William Eulberg Kelm, "The People's Theatre," *The Palimpsest*, March, 1928, 89-90.

Hattie Bernard came to Dubuque, the editor of the *Daily Express and Herald* termed her "as pleasing an actress as ever stepped on the boards" in this town. C. B. Mulholland, a dialect actor, appeared in two afterpieces, *The Irish Lion* and *The Old Guard*, adding according to the press "a certain zest to the literary repast." Maggie Mitchel, a comedienne popularly called the "Fairy Star of the West" played to large audiences, and late in November, the famous tragedian J. W. Wallack played the lead in *The King of the Commons*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Man with the Iron Mask*. The first season of the People's Theatre came to an end late in December, and although it had witnessed a wealth of drama, from the beginning it had not been successful financially. The company withdrew to the Julien Theatre located on the corner of Locust and Fifth Streets where it continued with apparent success, while the original playhouse remained dark during the rest of the winter and spring.¹⁹

The Express and Herald, was of the opinion that the failure of the People's Theatre was due to mismanagement, and the directors were accused of not being liberal enough with complimentary tickets to such individuals as reporters, railroad conductors, hotel proprietors, and steamboat captains, who might have assisted them in obtaining audiences, and of having on their free list too many "dead-heads" such as the city council, stockholders of the theatre, and their own friends. But if the theatre had cost them as much to build and equip as the press claimed it did and "stars" were still carrying away most of the proceeds, it is easy to understand why it failed.²⁰

On July 10, 1858, the People's Theatre was opened by Harry Farren with his "Star Company of the West," usually referred to as Farren's Varieties Troupe. Coming from St. Louis, the company consisted of ten persons in addition to the Farrens, both of whom were able players. It was received with enthusiasm in Dubuque, opening in *The Lady of Lyons*, private boxes selling for five dollars, stall seats for seventy-five cents, seats in the dress circle and parquet, fifty cents, and those in the gallery for a quarter. An extensive repertoire was offered, and Mr. Farren was said to have played a fine Shylock, and "as the bloody and remorseless Richard" was reported to have been equal to Booth, no doubt the highest compliment the local critic could have tendered him. But, like so many frontier companies, while it drew enthusiastic audiences, it did not find its performances very lucrative. It may have derived some consolation,

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 90-96.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 96; John Ely Briggs, "The Star System," *The Palimpsest*, March, 1928.

however, in the fact that when it left by boat for Davenport and Peoria, many of Dubuque's best citizens were at the wharf to see "this gentlemanly and ladylike" company off. Other troupes tried their luck at this theatre that year.²¹ Early in October, 1858, a Mr. Wilson opened for a week's engagement with a capable company and a few days later a company of players under Breslaw²² and Allen presented the celebrated Mr. and Mrs. Waller at the People's. These stars specialized in Shakespearean productions. Mr. Waller's Hamlet was ranked by the local press as good as could be found "either in England or America," and Mrs. Waller's Ophelia was acclaimed the "work of a great artist."²³ But even with such ability on the part of its stars, and with the support of an able company, the performances were not well attended.

In the spring of 1859 the undaunted Harry Farren returned to Dubuque for an extended engagement, bringing numerous stars to the People's Theatre, among whom were James E. Murdock and James H. Hackett, "the greatest living Falstaff." Probably the most expensive star to visit Dubuque this season was Mathilda Heron. Her Camille was pronounced by the local critic the best he had ever seen, and he spoke in detail of the way in which she brought out "with the refined taste of a true artist, all the delicate lights and shadows, subduing and spiritualizing the sensuous portions of the character, she makes the play what few have ever succeeded in doing, a beautiful, instructive, refining representation."²⁴ The second season of the Farren Company closed on May 14, 1859. Some of the troupe remained a few days to appear in a benefit²⁵ for Welsh Edwards, who "brought down the house tremendously" in *A Bachelor's Bedroom*, *Cavaliers and Roundheads*, and *The Magic Shirt*. On

²¹ Schick, *Early Theatre in Eastern Iowa*, 67-70; Kelm, "The People's Theatre," 100-101.

²² This may have been the Breslau found elsewhere in the west; the frontier press and contemporary writers were careless about spelling, first names, and initials.

²³ *Dubuque Express and Herald*, October 3, 10, 17, 1858.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, and Kelm, "The People's Theatre," 103.

²⁵ Theatrical benefits are an interesting phase of American theatrical history. They were apparently of English origin during the time of James I. After 1695, when receipts were too small to pay the actors in full, it became common to give benefit performances, in which players offered favorite bills, made appeals to the public to attend, and pocketed most of the proceeds. Colley Cibber, *An Apology for His Life*, New York, n. d., 87.

Such benefits became an important clause in the agreements between actors and managers on the western frontier. Dunlap says that the performer often lived beyond his means, expecting benefit proceeds to pay his debts. In western theatres the phrase "the benefits had begun" was usually indicative of the approaching end of the season. Dunlap, *History of American Theatre*, *passim*.

May 27, 1859, the People's Theatre was burned to the ground, and its activities brought "to an abrupt and untimely end."

In 1833 the first permanent settlement was made in the vicinity of Davenport, in what later became eastern Iowa, and three years later a town was plotted.²⁶ The first settlers were Americans, but in the forties many Germans came in, and both Americans and Germans were active in the development of the early theatre in Davenport. In its early years this river town enjoyed many kinds of entertainment. The first play given in this vicinity, according to available records, was *Monsieur Tonson*, presented by a dramatic company called The Thespian Players from Fort Snelling in October, 1836.²⁷ Two years later the town had its first recorded circus performance when the American Arena Company appeared in the month of July.

That there was considerable activity connected with the theatre in Davenport before November, 1840, is evident, since at that time the Town Council decided to tax such entertainments, which so far had been free from license fees. Unfortunately, there are no newspaper records of theatricals in the forties. That there was interest in the stage is reflected by contemporary newspaper items relating to the theatre in other towns, much of which seems to have been adverse commenting on the general wickedness of the stage and those connected with it.²⁸ The first advertisement of a dramatic performance in Davenport was that of a temperance play, *The Drunkard*, or *The Fallen Saved*, offered in April, 1852, by the F. L. Robinson Company. There was also a temperance farce, given as an afterpiece, and songs, duets and instrumental solos. All seats were twenty-five cents, and the audience was seated in a "large wat-

²⁶ Fort Armstrong was established in 1812 on the Mississippi not far from where Davenport was later located.

²⁷ At this time Davenport, only a few years old, had 500 people. Whereas in many frontier towns amateurs preceded professional players, the reverse was true of Davenport; Schick, 174.

²⁸ Burlington was reported to have had a theatre in July, 1840, and a theatrical company played at Lawrenceburg in 1849. Performances were reported at Galena and Rock Island from time to time during the forties. The thespian organization of Davenport, operating in 1838, and many later dramatic companies, players, and entertainers, also played in other Iowa towns. Dan Rice, well-known manager and clown, tells of his exhibitions in the tavern of Captain James Palmer in Bloomington (Muscatine) in the early forties. Palmer, suspicious of Rice's financial ability to pay the tavern bill, asked for payment in advance. He agreed to accept payment later when Rice made him door keeper and ticket seller. After the exhibition when Rice asked Palmer for the proceeds, "Captain Jim" had very little to turn over as he had allowed all his friends to enter free. Rice could not pay the tavern bill, and Palmer did not attempt to collect it. Bruce E. Mahan, "Three Early Taverns," *The Palimpsest*, August, 1922, 260.

erproof Pavillion." In August, 1852, the Spaulding and Rogers North American Circus Company gave an afternoon and evening performance, presenting as one of their features a "very interesting National Drama entitled *The Spirit of '76*." In September Dan Rice's Hippodrome Circus Company presented *The Bedouins of the Desert*, *The Tournament*, and other pieces, apparently spectacles, rather than pure drama.

The fact that from 1836 to 1853 all entertainments in Davenport had to be staged in hotel dining rooms, church assembly rooms, school rooms, outdoor pavillions, or in the court house, for lack of other accommodations, may have restricted or delayed the appearance of the legitimate theatre. Early in 1853 Le Claire Hall was opened, and for several decades was the amusement center of Davenport. The building was four stories high and was an imposing structure for so young a town. Theatrical performances were given in a hall on the third floor, reached by an outside stairway, and lighted with oil or fluid lamps.²⁹ It was leased by G. J. Adams, who opened it as the National Theatre," for the production of the moral drama."³⁰ The next year a theatrical troupe under a Mr. Wyman gave performances in the hall. Although the American newspaper in Davenport made no mention of the playing of this company, the German paper reviewed it enthusiastically.

In October, 1855, Sallie St. Clair's St. Louis Varieties opened an engagement playing for two weeks. Offering such favorites as *The Lady of Lyons*, and *The Loan of a Lover*, the company received satisfactory reports from the press. On September 2, 1856, Hough and Myers managers of a theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota, opened at the Le Claire with a company of twenty-two players, offering *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Lady of Lyons*, *The Stranger*, *Fazio*, *Ingomar*, *Camille*, *Lucretia Borgia*, *Therese*, *The Orphan of Geneva*, *Clari*, *The Maid of Milan*, and *Richilieu*, some of which were presented more than once. Davenport saw its first Shakespearean play, *Romeo and Juliet*, this season. Hough and Myers were the first to introduce the star system to the Davenport stage when, after a short period of plays by the regular company they began to bring in

²⁹ Schick, 50-51.

³⁰ Opposition to the theatre was on two counts—to plays and "play-actors," and to the general character of people who attended. Plays were sometimes presented under the guise of lectures, readings, concerts, and museum exhibitions; thus occasionally an overture would be advertised and the entire musical play produced. Opposition was often broken down by the methods of the F. L. Robinson Company who in April, 1852, presented a temperance play and afterpiece. Doubtless, many editors reflected the attitude of a majority of their subscribers. Eaton, *The Actor's Heritage*, Chapter VII.

well-known players among whom were Kate Denin, Samuel Ryan, an Irish comedian, and Kate Denin's sister Susan. The performances of the company according to the press were "of a chaste and high character . . . well calculated to afford information and amusement to all." On several occasions the audience was so carried away by the acting that they rose to their feet cheering. The managers felt the reception given their company warranted planning a regular semi-annual visit there.³¹

Early in 1857 Sallie St. Claire brought her St. Louis Varieties for another engagement presenting a number of frontier favorites. In March it was announced by the press that Gary Hough had returned and was making preparations for altering Le Claire Hall. While this was being done, he opened at the German Theatre, on March 17, in *The Wife* and *The Yankee Duelist*. The streets were in an almost impassable condition—as usual in the spring in mid-western settlements—but those who managed to attend found the program excellent. A second performance was offered in the German Theatre and a third in the remodeled Le Claire Hall. During the season Hough offered many competent guest stars, such as the McFarlands, Sallie St. Claire, Susan Denin, G. W. Jamison, a fine impersonator of the Negro, who must have commanded a high salary, and the Coudocks, C. W. and his daughter Eliza. Hough's company and its stars offered an extensive repertoire, presenting the largest group of Shakespearean plays in Davenport in pre-Civil War days.³² An advertising device new upon the frontier was commented upon by the *Iowa Gazette*, that of placing on the drop curtain the names and addresses of various Davenport business firms. The press gave Hough credit for the plan which they said, "was used at that time in but few cities of the Union." They insisted however, that newspaper advertising would reach a much larger audience.³³

³¹ Not long after Hough and Myers left the town council of Davenport levied a tax of ten dollars for a single performance, fifty dollars for a month's engagement, one hundred and fifty for six months and two hundred dollars for one year; Schick, 59.

³² Newspaper criticism of this company's productions was mostly favorable; the emphasis of the press was almost altogether on the fact that the plays and acting had been entirely respectable and in no way morally offensive. Unlike that in many other frontier regions the press said little of the plays or the kind of acting of various players. Davenport no doubt portrayed the fundamental attitude characteristic of the rural communities toward the theatre; basically, they looked upon the institution as being capable of vulgarity and half expected to be shocked at any time. Scruples were gradually overcome, and, as the managers were wily enough to present plays as "moral dramas" and to maintain "chaste and correct" acting, the public was able to enjoy and applaud the theatre; Files of the *Iowa Gazette*, 1857; Schick, 65-72.

³³ Files of the *Iowa Gazette*, March, April, May, 1857.

In September, 1857, a theatrical troupe played an engagement of about a week at Le Claire Hall, but the repertoire it offered was not very good and there was little newspaper comment. The records of theatrical activity in the early part of 1858 are fragmentary, and it is not exactly known what companies played there.³⁴ Farren brought his company back on September 18, then going to Rock Island for one performance. Returning he offered *Camille*, and promptly invited adverse press comment.³⁵ The morality of this production was considered "of very questionable nature." Farren proceeded to offer such plays as *The School for Scandal*, *London Assurance*, *Macbeth* and *Richard III*, without further criticism, but before his engagement terminated in October, the editor of the *Gazette* was beginning to regret this lenient attitude toward the stage, and to comment that he now had ample basis for his former suspicions of "all playactors." "For a long time," he mused, "he had been supporting the theatre with some wear and tear of conscience," for it was true that "every theatrical company had left Davenport without . . . paying [its] bills in full." Afraid that Farren would do likewise, the *Gazette* sued him for payment, and the actor promptly retaliated by bringing suit against the newspaper to secure payment for the complimentary tickets that had been so liberally supplied to members of the staff. It hardly needs to be said that the local court decided in favor of the paper.³⁶

Other companies visited Davenport in the late fifties, but undoubtedly the best that appeared before the Civil War was McVicker's. This company opened in June, 1859, at the German Theatre, playing twelve nights, offering not only old favorites, but some new plays such as *Our American Cousin*, *Pike's Peak* or *The Davenport Boys on a Gold Hunt*, *Bride of Lammermoor*, and *A Handsome Husband*. It closed with *Sam Patch in France*, the last American play given here until 1863, for until then interest centered in the German theatre.

It has been noticed before that wherever the Germans settled they supported the theatre, as well as musical organizations, and nowhere is their attitude toward the stage better shown than in Davenport. The German theatre there was composed originally of amateurs, none of whom earned a living from the stage. It had

³⁴ Companies managed by William Henderson and Mr. Weaver appeared in Rock Island; Weaver's troupe was advertised to appear in Davenport, but there is no record that it did. Doubtless some companies were frightened away by the high licence fees.

³⁵ *Iowa Gazette*, September 23, 1858.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, September, October, November, 1858; Schick, 68-70.

an existence of some years, from 1855 to 1910, more than a half century of considerable activity, with its best period probably being the decade from 1865-1875. During the summer, plays were offered in the local beer gardens, and in the winter, after 1856, in the regular German theatre, which has been mentioned as being used by American companies when the Le Claire was being redecorated.

The German theatre differed in several ways from the American theatre in Davenport. It opened its doors on Sundays, which the latter never did, and none but Germans looked with favor on such a custom. It remained open the year around, for there was always enough interest to attract an audience, while the American theatre had short and financially insecure seasons. The Germans considered women on the stage respectable people in honored positions, but it was a long time before Americans in general would take such a view of feminine players. The Germans built the first permanent theatre in Davenport, while the Americans contented themselves for many years with the makeshift upper story of a local building.

When the American theatre closed in 1859 the German stage became even more important than it had been. After 1862 the American newspapers praised highly the acting of the professional stars who had almost from the first appeared with the German amateurs, and urged even those citizens who did not speak the language to attend the plays. The Verein maintained its amateur standing until 1872, when the Turner Society bought the building it had built, and continued through the first decade of this century as a professional organization.³⁷

Laid out in 1846 at the confluence of the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers the town of Des Moines developed slowly. Lacking good river navigation, and with stage transportation expensive and uncertain, it remained on the outer edge of settlement until the arrival of the railroad. Fort Des Moines, with an early population numbering a few hundred, did not have a theatre, and held its social gatherings and what few amusements it enjoyed in the log court house. There is no record of when the first theatricals were held at Fort Des Moines. In the late 1840's "Winchell, the ventriloquist, with his trained mice," ventured that far west, and played to an appreciative audience. As the town grew in size and importance the old log court house was no longer satisfactory as a meeting place, and in 1853 Hoyt Sherman, a citizen of some importance, built Sherman Hall. While there is no description of the building avail-

³⁷ Schick, 74-106; the panic of 1857 reduced most amusement activities to a low point and they were not revived until after the Civil War.

able, it is reasonable to assume that it was patterned after the halls of the period, and doubtless was a frame structure with a stage or platform at one end, heated with stoves, and provided with seats for a few hundred people. It was in this hall that the first theatrical troupe to play to a Des Moines audience appeared.³⁸

From April 7 to 14 J. C. Morrison, an actor-manager, presented his company of players in Sherman Hall in a series of comedies and tragedies, the names of which are not known. Characteristic of the frontier period, especially in rural areas, Morrison's troupe ran into church opposition. While theatricals were presented at Sherman Hall in the evenings, union prayer meetings were held there during the daytime, and a heated controversy developed. A local editor, reviewing the situation made the following comments:

A theatrical troupe under the direction of the popular actor, J. C. Morrison, has been giving therein [Sherman Hall] night entertainments of a creditable character to our play loving people. Thus our spiritual teachers have been furnished with a lively subject for comment and illustration, and the mental barometer of the city has rapidly fluctuated from grave to gay. . . . Life is only a checkered scene and the serious and the comical are often singularly blended. . . .³⁹

On July 5, Des Moines had its only other recorded entertainment in 1858, when the Spaulding and Rogers Circus played to enthusiastic crowds, pitching its "canvas top" on a vacant lot on the edge of town. Sherman Hall experienced some competition in 1858, when the Savery House was made into a "hall" with "superb chairs" for its patrons. While the new hall never became popular for theatricals, it served for a number of years as a place to hold dances, concerts, ice cream and strawberry festivals, and benefit suppers.

Through the late fifties the theatrical scene was very quiet in the Iowa capital, and there was little entertainment except an occasional musical program, and an average of one circus a summer.⁴⁰ In November, 1860, the ventriloquist Winchell returned to Des Moines, and was greeted with delight by the public. "Winchell always draws a good crowd," wrote a local editor, "and then splits their sides with laughing. If a fellow is in trouble with the blue

³⁸ *Des Moines Daily Register*, February 1, 1847; Agnes O. Lewison, "A Theatrical History of Des Moines, Iowa, 1846-1890," Master's Thesis, University of Iowa, 1931, 1-2.

³⁹ *Iowa Weekly Citizen*, April 14, 21, May 6, 1858.

⁴⁰ The location of the rural village of Des Moines rather than frontier handicaps retarded theatrical entertainment. Troupes from Chicago went south via Louisville to St. Louis and New Orleans, leaving Des Moines off their schedules. Lewison, 4.

D--Is he should go at once to see Winchell's show, and we guarantee a speedy cure."⁴¹ Winchell played for two nights to packed houses at Savery Hall.

When the Civil War began, Des Moines had no playhouses to close, as happened in so many other places, but its two halls were dark most of the time except for a few recitals, concerts and lectures, or a traveling menagerie that chanced to come that way. By 1864 many of the citizens were hungry for entertainment, and when a local editor learned that Dubuque, another Iowa town, was having "full blown exhibitions," he wrote a few words of commendation of such activity, assuming a critical attitude toward his own town. The editor's statement that

The good old days of Dubuque are fast coming round again. This all comes from a superior civilization of the town. We expect it will be a long, long day before *we* can have any high old tragedy here. brought forth the following heated reaction from one of Des Moines citizens:

Your quasi regrets, Mr. Editor, that our good city does not rejoice over 'full blown theatrical exhibitions' such as are now fully feathered in Dubuque, grate harshly upon my ears, when we are so badly deficient in other more needed and more reputable institutions. A city which failed to establish a course of lectures last Winter, and which has not made the first effort to procure a library and reading room for the masses, should suffer a long while for want of theatrical exhibitions. Would not such an institution, well provided with the best literature of the day, be pointed out to with more pride and satisfaction than a theatre. This is from one who wants first to establish a public library.

The editor of the *Weekly Register*, afraid, no doubt, of losing subscribers and advertisers, as well as of being charged with disloyalty to his own town, meekly retracted his statement, explaining that he had been writing "only in fun," and would "rather have a quiet, sensible reading of Will Shakespeare at our fireside than to see and hear a whole regiment of professional actors, as now-a-days stalk across the boards and saw the air in pretended mimicry or tragedy."⁴² Nothing more was heard concerning theatrical activity in Des Moines for a period of at least two years, during which time a library was established and a lecture course provided.

On November 12, 1866, P. T. Barnum lectured in the court house

⁴¹ *The Des Moines Commonwealth*, November 13, 1860.

⁴² *Weekly State Register*, April 27, 1864. Town rivalry was keen in the west; each town was sure of its destiny to become the "greatest and largest town in its state or territory, or even in the whole west." This rivalry is well presented by Marie Haefner, "Rivalry Among River Towns," *The Palimpsest*, May, 1937, 160-175.

at Des Moines on "The Art of Getting Money." His appearance stirred enough interest in providing some entertainment to bring forth from the editor of the *Register* a request for a home talent production to while away some of the long winter evenings. On December 28 and 29 one D. Pine and Company presented a "combined panorama" at the court house. This was well attended, but did nothing to further the amateur production, and there was no theatrical activity in Des Moines for many months.⁴³

The real theatrical history of this Iowa town began in October, 1867, when Dick Johnson, a Des Moines citizen interested in the possibilities of the drama there, converted Turner's Hall into the Northwestern Theatre.⁴⁴ He organized a stock company, and presented Mrs. Melissa Breslau as his leading lady. The engagement of Johnson's company lasted from October 21 to January 15, with the usual programs of a play and an afterpiece.⁴⁵ The outstanding production was probably Des Moines first Shakespearean play, *Macbeth*, offered on October 25 at Mrs. Breslau's benefit. The new theatre had been well equipped, one item being its drop curtain painting entitled "A View of Venice." The press carefully followed the activities in the theatre, commending the acquisition of stoves late in October, but protesting "against the sale of peanuts on the theatre floor." "The music by the peanut army last night," commented the editor, "was like the crunching chorus of hungry swine turned into a new corn pasture. Give us cessation and—ventilation."⁴⁶

Various stars were presented by Johnson to bolster his regular stock company. At a benefit for a Mr. Norman early in November, Bessie Clifford appeared as Desdemona in *Othello*, and some three weeks later Mr. and Mrs. Selden Irwin, well-known players on various frontiers, appeared in *The Hunchback*. They remained in Des Moines for several weeks. At their performance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Miss Carrie Savery of Des Moines made her debut, playing the part of Little Eva. A few weeks later Harry Rainsforth and H. King appeared as stars in *Our American Cousin*.⁴⁷ The engage-

⁴³ *Weekly State Register*, April 27, May 4, 1864; *Daily State Register*, November 10, 15, 18, 23, and December 25, 29, 1866.

⁴⁴ The Des Moines Turners, organized in July, 1857, had been admitted in August to the American Turnerbund, whose purpose was "the cultivation of the perfect man, physically and mentally." Turner Hall in Des Moines was a frame structure. Lewison, 8.

⁴⁵ Among the plays were *The Hidden Hand*, *The Drunkard*, *The Lady of Lyons*, *La Tour de Nesle*, *Camille*, *The Female Spy*, *Ingomar the Barbarian*, *The Hunchback*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. *Daily State Register*, October 22, 24, 29, 1867.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, October 22, 1867.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, November 5, 11, 27 and December 12, 20, 1867.

ments of Johnson's Company ended because of financial difficulties. In spite of its lack of financial success, this first theatrical season was important because it aroused interest in the drama and laid the foundations for its future activities.⁴⁸

In early November, when the theatrical season had been at its height, an organized movement had been started for the erection of an opera house in Des Moines. Sponsored by the Turner Association and backed by several substantial citizens, including the editor of the *Daily Register*, the project was not successful, and was soon abandoned as a community venture. The Turner Association, however, raised enough money to construct a hall two stories in height, which provided a room for meetings and entertainment purposes larger than that furnished by Sherman Hall.⁴⁹

Early in February, 1868, Dick Johnson opened the Northwestern Theatre with a new company of sixteen members under the direction of T. S. Holland, a "capable tragedian," starring Miss Katie Putnam, advertised to have come from Crosely's Opera House in Chicago. The engagement lasted until February 28, on which date Katie Putnam, who had enjoyed great popularity in Des Moines played her farewell presentation. There was no further theatrical activity in Des Moines until April, when a company calling itself the Chicago Theatrical Combination opened a two weeks' engagement at Turner's Hall. That Johnson might have had the true venture lust of actor-managers of an earlier day seems indicated by curious press comments concerning him. He certainly had labored hard to offer theatrical entertainment and had brought really good players to Des Moines. However, when the Chicago Theatrical Combination appeared at Turners Hall and Johnson was to be a member of the troupe, the *Daily Register* asked the community to support the company and not to take out their feelings against Johnson on the other players. The company finished its engagement on May 13, curiously enough tendering its last appearance as a benefit for Dick Johnson "in appreciation," to use the words of the press, "of his long and continued labors to give Des Moines good theatrical entertainment and amusement."⁵⁰ Two days later a new company under the management of C. W. Riddle opened an engagement, retaining a few members of the retiring troupe. A limited

⁴⁸ On January 15 the theatre lights were turned off when the company's gas bill was unpaid; the audience waited until candles were lighted for the play to proceed, but no more performances were offered. Lewison, 10-11.

⁴⁹ *Daily State Register*, November 3, 1867.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, April 25, 26, 28, and May 10, 12, 1868.

patronage brought their stay in Des Moines to a speedy close, and the company disbanded.⁵¹ The sole amusements during the summer and fall of 1868 consisted of a circus and managerie, and a local amateur minstrel production offered by the newly organized Timbuctoo Musical Association.⁵²

In December, 1868, Moore's Hall, located on the corner of Walnut and Fourth Streets, was completed, and became the chief amusement and theatrical center of Des Moines until More's Opera House was erected in 1874. Moore's Hall was built by a merchant of that name, and located above his department store. It was 92 by 44 feet in size, and measured 27 feet from floor to ceiling. It could seat some 850 persons, the gallery accommodating about 150. The press described the arrangement of the hall as good:

and the frescoes . . . are in the main excellent. Much credit is due Mr. Moore for the enterprising spirit he has displayed in furnishing our citizens with a fine hall, which is destined to be the rallying point for all concerts, lectures, exhibitions, and public entertainments generally.⁵³

The first recorded entertainment held in the new hall was a concert, given by the Timbuctoo Musical Association on December 10, to an audience of more than 800 people. On January 25, 1869, Varney's Dramatic Troupe opened in this hall with *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, offering the same play for six successive nights to crowded houses, and closing its engagement on January 30 with several short comedies.⁵⁴ Moore's Hall had its boards occupied from time to time between the engagements of regular dramatic companies by single-night stands of acrobats, minstrels, lecturers, ventriloquists, and magicians whose performances were, as a rule, well attended. One of the most successful one-night productions in Des Moines during this time was that of a group of midgets consisting of Tom Thumb⁵⁵ and his wife, Commodore Nutt, and Miss Minnie Warren. Offered on February 22, 1869, this exhibition caused so much interest among the people of Des Moines that as

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, May 15, 22, 1868.

⁵² This group of local musicians and players appeared at times in Des Moines for a number of years. The first program, September 1, 1868, featured Chris Bathman, a local barber, "doing corks". Lewison, 14-15.

⁵³ *Daily State Register*, December 18, 1868.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, January 19, 25, 28, 30, 1869.

⁵⁵ The "General" was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in January, 1832. His real name was Charles S. Stratton. P. T. Barnum first introduced Tom Thumb to the public in his museum in New York in 1832. He was immensely popular and visited Europe in 1844 and 1865. In 1863 he married Lavinia Warren of Middletown, Massachusetts. T. Allison Brown, *History of the American Stage, 1733 to 1870*, New York, 1870, 361.

many as 450 people were turned away from Moore's Hall because of the lack of room.⁵⁶

The Varney Company appeared again in March, 1869, for a short engagement, the high point of its repertoire consisting of a presentation *Under the Gaslight*.⁵⁷ In the summer of 1869 the Plunkett Star Dramatic Troupe, with its chief actor the comedian John Dillon,⁵⁸ played an engagement, advertising a company of "twenty-one first class players." One of the most successful productions offered was *The Factory Girl*, with Miss Plunkett in the leading role.⁵⁹ The subject of an opera house for Des Moines continued to be discussed late in 1869 and in 1870, but no action was taken. The population of the town in January, 1870, was estimated at 7,000 and was supporting two theatres. At Turner's Hall Professor J. W. MacCallister, a magician, was appearing under the direction of Harry Weston, while at Moore's Hall the Plunkett Star Troupe was featuring Mr. and Miss Couldock in the popular plays of the day, as well as in dramatic readings.⁶⁰

In April, 1870, the Seldin Irwin Company played an engagement, and in July it was reported that Laura Keene and her capable company would appear for two nights. In September the press commented that "Laura is a good girl histrionically, and we shall be glad theatrically to see her." Miss Keene, however, became ill and her company did not appear in Des Moines, but did play in Davenport in the latter part of August, at which time the *Davenport Democrat* stated that "Laura Keene has gone back on Des Moines—she prefers playing in larger cities like Davenport." The editor of the *Daily Register* promptly retorted that there were places "where the people like to spend their money on worn out, played out, traveled out actresses and didn't know the difference."⁶¹

For some time the success of the Timbuctoo Musical Association had caused talk of forming an amateur dramatic society in Des Moines. Early in November, 1870, the Des Moines Library Association appointed a special committee to organize a dramatic society

⁵⁶ *Daily State Register*, February 19, 22, 27, 1869.

⁵⁷ Lewison, 17-19. On March 31, the press heralded the return of the "irrepressible Dick Johnson, the best comedian ever in Des Moines, ... with a troupe of players." This was his last appearance there, though the papers record his activities elsewhere.

⁵⁸ John Dillon had been a popular comedian in the east and in the McKiver theatres of the Great Lakes area. His wife was a sister of Mrs. John Langrische. The Langrisches played widely in the west.

⁵⁹ *Daily State Register*, July 12, 17, November 29, December 6, 1869.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, January 10, 14, 21, 26, 1870.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, August 30, 1870.

for the purpose of staging what was termed "a series of parlour theatrical performances." The group was organized and James Ellis was chosen as manager. On November 18, the opening program of *The Lady of Lyons* and *Bombastes Furioso* was offered, and was later repeated. The proceeds improved the financial status of the Library Association, and the Parlor Theatrical Troupe was placed on a stable basis. A second program was offered on January 12, 1871.⁶²

On April 13 the Lisa Weber Troupe of British Blondes, a famous burlesque and company combination, made its initial appearance at Moore's Hall, and from May 8 to May 20 the N. C. Forrester Dramatic Company of New York played at Moore's, presenting such plays as *Don Cesar de Bazan*, *East Lynne*, *Under the Gaslight*, *Rosedale*, *The Octoroon*, *The Lady of Lyons* and *The Honeymoon*.⁶³ In the fall of 1871, Selden Irwin organized a circuit that included Des Moines, his troupe playing there for two week periods on five different occasions from September through December. The company featured Harry Richmond and Mrs. Phelps in *Black Eyed Susan*, Harry Rainsforth in *Rip Van Winkle*, George Arden in the nautical play, *Ben Bolt*, and presented the Irwins in a number of popular roles. At this time Moore's Hall was improved, the stage being enlarged and the front made circular, more dressing rooms installed, a proscenium erected, new scenery and equipment added, and the interior redecorated.⁶⁴

The press was heartily in support of the theatre in Des Moines, complimenting the various theatrical troupes, and urging the public to attend the plays. But even with good dramatic companies and the improvement of Moore's Hall, the hopelessness of securing satisfactory audiences in competition with variety entertainment was shown by the following editorial comment:

It is really too bad that the legitimate drama cannot be better supported in this city. When every nigger show, sleight of hand performance, or dead beat 'mystery man' can draw crowded houses. Here we have an excellent dramatic company which comprises some star actors and actresses of more

⁶² *Ibid.*, November 4, 12, 18, 22, 1870.

⁶³ Nate C. Forrester, actor-manager, made his first appearance in Philadelphia in 1848 and his wife made hers there in 1850. Both won national reputations, co-starring for a quarter of a century in leading theatres of this country. In the late seventies Forrester opened an opera house in Denver, where he presented a great array of talent; Brown, *History of the American Stage*, 133; Melvin Schoberlin, *From Candles to Footlights*, Denver, 1941, 254-259.

⁶⁴ *Daily State Register*, May 5, 12, 18, 20, 1871; *Lewison*, 25-26.

than average talent, with a good stock company to assist them, and they play night after night to empty benches.⁶⁵

Seeburger's Music Hall, a "handsome building lighted with gas," was opened December 9, 1871, by an engagement of the S. T. Armstrong Theatrical Company. From 1872 until the opening of Moore's Opera House in February, 1874, various theatrical troupes visited Des Moines. Among these were the Selden Irwin Company, the Sawtelle Troupe, Fanny Price's Dramatic Company, and the Kendall Comedy Company, each of which presented "stars." In January, 1872, the *Register* paid high tribute to the Selden Irwin Company for its contributions to dramatic standards in Des Moines, stating that Mr. Irwin had "done more to give Des Moines a true decent drama, and has adhered resolutely to such a course despite the knowledge that the less legitimate drama would have paid . . . better."⁶⁶

The angle formed by the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers was well known to fur traders and explorers long before a military post was established there. In 1805 the title to the land on which Fort Snelling was later built was acquired from the Sioux Indians for the United States Government by Lieutenant Zebulon Pike, and in 1819 a detachment of infantry headed by Colonel Henry Leavenworth was assigned to establish an army post which might serve as a wedge to open this northwest Indian country. After several temporary camps had been built, Colonel Josiah Snelling was chosen to succeed Leavenworth, and immediately began the construction of Fort Anthony on the bluffs overlooking both rivers. Although occupied in 1822, the post was not finished until 1823 and in 1825 its name was changed to Fort Snelling in honor of the commanding officer. The work of Major Lawrence Taliaferro as supervisor of the fur trade in the area was very effective, and for more than thirty years Fort Snelling was the army's most northern post, and a place of considerable importance.

With the Indian cessation of the triangular shaped area between the St. Croix and the Mississippi Rivers to the United States government in 1837, lumber towns sprang up and the post office of Point Douglas was opened at the mouth of the St. Croix in 1841. In 1843, St. Paul had three or four log stores and in 1846 was granted a post office. When Minnesota Territory was created in 1849, this little settlement boasted of 840 inhabitants and was made the capital.

⁶⁵ Despite this editor's observation, one of the largest crowds of the season assembled in Moore's Hall, October 26, 1871, to see the Selden Irwin troupe present *Othello*; *Daily State Register*, October 27, 1871.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, January 28, 1872.

During the fifties settlers flocked to Minnesota in large numbers. Almost every day large wood-burning side-wheeler steamers arrived at the landing with five or six hundred passengers, and "plowed down the river again" toward St. Louis, loaded with furs, moccasins and dried buffalo tongues brought to St. Paul from the north in caravans of creaking Red River oxcarts. Minnesota came into the union as a state in 1858, at which time St. Paul was a thriving frontier town, and capital of the new commonwealth.

The first theatrical performance offered at Fort Snelling was the play *Pizarro*, given in 1821 or 1822. One Joseph Brown, who saw the same play presented at Market Hall in St. Paul in the summer of 1856, wrote a story for the local press in which he stated that he had been in the cast at the fort thirty-five years before, playing the role of Elvira, the tragic heroine. Colonel John H. Bliss, who was a boy at Fort Snelling in the early 1830's while his father was in command there, tells how "undeniably tedious" both officers and men found the long winters. Every fortnight or so they would get up a theatrical performance in which those taking feminine roles would borrow dresses from the wives of the officers, while they made a "generous sacrifice to art of their cherished whiskers and mustaches."⁶⁷

In the autumn of 1836, Inspector General George Groghan visited the fort in line of duty, and the thespian players of the garrison presented *Monsieur Tonson*, in his honor on the evening of October 7. The parts were, of course, all taken by men, and one writer in describing this play commented that "here, far away from the city streets and French barbers on a crude stage, Jack Ardourly fell in love with the beautiful Adolphine de Courcy—who, probably only a few hours before had been hurrying to finish a task of cleaning guns," in order that the enthusiastic thespians might "call on the generous women of the garrison and beg from them capes, bonnets and hoop skirts."⁶⁸

Harry Watkins, who served at Fort Snelling as regimental fifer from 1838 to 1841, had his first taste of drama there at the age of fifteen when he played leading lady in a soldier cast. According to him, the post library contained a large number of plays, and the company stationed there gave a performance every fortnight. Wat-

⁶⁷ Theodore Blegen, *Building Minnesota*, Boston, 1938, 115-116; Frank M. Whiting, "Theatrical Personalities of Old St. Paul," *Minnesota History*, December, 1942; John H. Bliss, "Reminiscences of Fort Snelling," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. II, 342.

⁶⁸ *Minnesota Historical Collections*, II, 130.

kins later left the army to become a strolling player.⁶⁹ It is thought there were many performances at Fort Snelling in the 1840's and 1850's although the records are fragmentary and incomplete.⁷⁰

Mazourka Hall, St. Paul's first theatre, was erected in 1850. It was a large frame building constructed of heavy, roughly hewn timbers, fastened together with wooden pegs, two stories high, and with the hall serving as a theatre on the ground floor. The upper floor was supported by large wooden columns. There were benches for seats, a medium sized stage, and two small dressing rooms. St. Paul had its first professional drama in the summer of 1851 when George Holland, the famous comedian and at that time manager of Placide's Varieties in New Orleans, brought a company by steamboat to the little Minnesota town for an engagement of two weeks.⁷¹ Opening on August 12 they presented farces, light musical skits, melodrama and novelties to appreciative audiences. The venture was a financial success.

The editor of the *St. Paul Daily Times*, T. M. Newson, who was somewhat of a crusader against the stage in general, only commented briefly on Holland's appearance in the city and offered no attack. In the meantime, the actor was living up to a national reputation, playing six different parts in a single play, ranging from that of an old man to the role of a french maid.⁷² The editor of the *Minnesota Pioneer* was so strongly impressed that he declared Holland to be a "wonderful Protean actor," in himself the equivalent of a complete dramatic company." The citizens of St. Paul, who could now count their numbers as a little over a thousand, evidently agreed with the editor, for they supported Placide's Varieties with enthusiasm during the eleven nights on which performances were presented.⁷³

In the summer of 1852, the Langrische and Atwater Theatrical Company played a two weeks' engagement at Mazourka Hall to

⁶⁹ Maude and Otis Skinner, *One Man in His Time, The Adventure of H. Watkins, Strolling Player, 1845-1863, From His Journal*, Philadelphia, 1938, 250.

⁷⁰ Frank M. Whiting, "A History of the Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota, from Its Beginnings to 1890," Doctoral thesis, University of Minnesota, 1941. Through the courtesy of Dr. Grace Nute, Curator of Manuscripts in the Minnesota State Historical Society Library, notes were obtained on this thesis covering the period down to 1868; references to this material will be made as Whiting, Notes.

⁷¹ In the 1850's the theatrical season in St. Paul was largely a summer month affair, lasting from two weeks to five and a half months, depending upon the number of companies appearing and the support offered.

⁷² The average frontier thespian considered versatility a necessity, and even mediocre players took pride in their ability to play a range of characters. In many cases the acting must have been inferior.

⁷³ Whiting, Notes; "Theatrical Personalities of Old St. Paul"; T. M. Newson, *Pen Pictures of St. Paul*, St. Paul, 1886, 260-261..

crowded houses.⁷⁴ Among the plays offered were *The Lady of Lyons*, *William Tell*, *The Honeymoon*, *Charles the Second*, and *Don Ceasar de Bazan*. No professional troupes played the boards in St. Paul in 1853, although two such companies had planned to come. The factor that prevented their appearance was no doubt transportation. Two minstrel shows made their appearance, a panorama was shown and two other single entertainments appeared. One of these was a Mr. Winchell who presented a program of "drolleries," and the other a capable wizard and magician named McCallister.⁷⁵ In spite of the lack of legitimate drama, the year 1853 was of some importance theatrically as two additional playhouses were provided—the court house to be used for short engagements or single night stands, and Market Hall, which soon came to be the most important place in the town in which to offer a program.

In the summer of 1854, the St. Louis Varieties appeared for a three weeks' engagement, starring Miss Charlotte Crampton, who, like Holland, amazed the citizens by her versatility. Although a good list of popular plays were presented, the press failed to show much interest in the productions.⁷⁶ The same group came again in the summer of 1855, featuring Miss Sallie St. Claire,⁷⁷ with Jack Huntley as manager. That summer a bitter editorial battle raged between Charles J. Heenies of the *Daily Pioneer* and T. M. Newson of the *Daily Times* regarding the general corrupting influence of the theatre, and the noise, drunkenness, and even immorality, which often accompanied it. The public, however, seemed little influenced by the argument and supported the St. Louis Varieties well. In addition to dramatic offerings in St. Paul that summer, Ole Bull gave a number of concerts. There seems also some proof that Price's Burlesque Opera Company presented minstrel and variety performances.

In 1856, the Hough and Myers Dramatic Company played a long engagement at the Market Theatre, lasting from May 7 to August 6. While the company was an able one in general, the real star was C.

⁷⁴ Whiting, Notes. Undoubtedly this was Jack Langrische and his brother-in-law, John B. Atwater, both of considerable importance in the theatres of the west. On the mining frontier Langrische and his wife were major figures, and Atwater was well known in California. The two men had formed a partnership in the early 1850's and at this time were operating a circuit in Wisconsin and Illinois.

⁷⁵ Whiting, Notes p. 2.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*,

⁷⁷ Sallie St. Claire (Clair), dancer and actress, was at the height of her popularity at the time of her engagements in St. Paul in 1855 and 1857. She might be called a "glamour girl of the fifties."

W. Couldock,⁷⁸ whose presence enabled it to offer a number of Shakespearean dramas. Plays already familiar to St. Paul audiences were offered, and others not already performed there were also given including *Fazio*, *Ingomar*, *Daughter of the Regiment*, *Still Water Runs Deep*, *Lucretia Borgia*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Camille*. Interest in the drama was further manifested by the organization of the Booth Dramatic Association, composed of a group of young men who wished to offer plays. In addition to the legitimate drama, Ole Bull gave three concerts; there were two minstrel shows, and an exhibition of Wilber's Chemical Panorama.⁷⁹

The summer of 1857 was the most active in the early period of St. Paul's theatrical history. Three companies played engagements there—the Sallie St. Clair Company, The Henry Van Liew Troupe, and the D. L. Scott Company, all of some importance. St. Paul was also visited by the Langrische Atwater Company playing in a tent, and the amateur organization, the Booth Dramatic Association was active. Several dramatic performances were offered by German citizens of the town in their language, and the soldiers at Fort Snelling presented a commendable performance of *The Lady of Lyons* with an all male cast.⁸⁰ In addition to dramatic activity, there were two circuses, a Hutchinson concert,⁸¹ an appearance by the Sylvian Sisters Variety Troupe, a dime museum, a recital of readings by Mr. and Mrs. Scott and Mrs. McCready, and one minstrel show. The Sallie St. Claire Troupe consisting of ten players presented C. W. Couldock and his daughter Eliza as guest stars, John Templeton, character actor and "Little Kay Putnam," who created a sensation

⁷⁸ Couldock, a man of violent temper, was famous for roles portraying intense emotion. In 1857 while in a Shakespeare play, he lost his temper because the manager had eliminated a scene without consulting him. In an ensuing sword scene he attacked his player opponent violently and when the curtain went down tore off his robes. Regaining his composure, he complimented the orchestra, rolled up his costume, and walked off the stage; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, April 8, 1888, January 22, 1889; Clara Morris, *Life on the Stage*, New York, 1907, 130-131; Whiting, "Theatrical Personalities," 310-311.

⁷⁹ Whiting, Notes, p. 3.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁸¹ The Hutchinson Family was famous on the frontier in the 1850's. The original Hutchinsons had come from Milford, New Hampshire, and consisted of Asa, John, and Judson and their families. Widely known as spiritualists and temperance singers, they were so popular that towns in Kansas and Minnesota were named after them. The three brothers founded Hutchinson, Minnesota. They and their sister, Abbey, were a famed quartette, assisted by Asa's wife, Lizzie, who sang solos. For fifteen years Asa's children had an independent troupe. He took the quartette to England in the 1840's where it was very successful. He died in Hutchinson, Minnesota in 1884. M. B. Leavitt, *Fifty Years in Theatrical Management*, New York, 1912, 5-7; Philip Jordan, "The Hutchinson Singers," *The Palimpsest*, May, 1937.

as Little Eva in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.⁸² A special feature of the performances were the musical numbers offered by a local organization of musicians called "The Old Gents Band."⁸³ The Couldock's offered several Shakespearean plays and in July *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was played on five consecutive nights. According to the press the company had a very successful season.

Two points of view regarding the theatre are well brought out in an argument between two St. Paul editors at this time concerning the versatile Sallie St. Claire. On June 22, 1857, the *Daily Minnesotan* praised the actress in the usual florid terms of the frontier in the following manner:

This accomplished lady stands proudly upon the very summit of the gorgeous temple of renown, the priestess of its glories and the guardian of its fame . . . The highborn genius of Miss St. Claire flings a glory upon the drama. To all these she adds a perfect *physique* and charm of grace—which make her the embodiment of that ideal, which only one in a thousand of candidates for histrionic honors can ever attain."

There were others, however, who felt differently, and Joseph Wheelock, another St. Paul editor, took up the challenge and answered the *Minnesotan*:⁸⁴

If she has such enthusiastic admirers in more appreciative circles, it is not the first time that an enchanting figure and ravishing ankles have created a sensation among very young men. She simply capers gracefully. She holds her head well, with a superb arching of the neck, and prances with a splendid curvette through the routine of the Thespian menage . . . Yet it must be confessed that Sallie has some talent. If her powers had been concentrated in a particular line of characters, instead of being squandered in ambitious but shallow displays of versatility, it is not impossible that she might have become an artiste.

Miss St. Claire was probably little disturbed by such realistic analysis, as her popularity continued and her company prospered. At the close of her first season a group of prominent citizens, including the governor of the Territory, gave her a benefit. In 1856 a young man in Muscatine, Iowa, had offered to fight a duel in her behalf, and the number of young men in St. Paul in 1857, who admired her was a standing topic of gossip. There seems to have been no scandal, however, connected with her name, and she was

⁸² Perhaps the Katie Putnam of later years in the west.

⁸³ One of these musicians was George Siebert, second violinist, and later St. Paul's best orchestra leader; Whiting, Notes, 4.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Whiting, "Theatrical Personalities," 308, from *The St. Paul Financial, Real Estate and Railroad Advertiser*, June 27, 1857.

said to have been "happily married and a person of much real worth."⁸⁵

One of the factors which delayed the dramatic development of this pioneer town in the 1850's was the lack of an adequate playhouse. Mazourka Hall, the court house, and Market Hall were all poor substitutes for a real theatre. Sara Fuller, a member of a prominent St. Paul family, in a letter written in the early fifties, speaks of attending a performance, and tells how greatly she suffered from the lack of ventilation. The only means of providing fresh air were the skylights overhead, since the windows were at one end and behind the stage. The audience had scarcely been seated when it began to rain and the skylights had to be closed. It was a very warm night and the young lady's escort took her to the door where she fainted, and her face was so marred for more than a week she had to wear a bandage. She decided that until conditions improved she would stay away from the theatre.⁸⁶

The first manager to attempt to improve housing conditions for the drama in St. Paul was Henry Van Liew, who arrived in the spring of 1857 and set about constructing a temporary playhouse to serve until a first class place could be built. He called his first building the People's Theatre, and it had the distinction of being the first building in St. Paul constructed primarily for theatrical purposes. It was a crude barnlike building, with sides of rough boards and a canvas roof, much like the boom playhouses of western mining regions in the early days, and is said to have cost \$750. The interior was as primitive and rough as the outside, the stage was "cramped and small," and movable benches served as seats; little is known of the lighting arrangements except that there were four footlights. However, Van Liew, who had been associated with the Julien Theatre in Dubuque, Iowa, brought with him an extensive wardrobe, properties and scenery. The People's Theatre was opened on June 27, 1857, with a capable company, including guest stars, singers, dancers, a good orchestra, a stage mechanic and a scenic artist. An ambitious repertoire of plays was offered.

Early in August the panic of 1857 closed all places of amusement except Van Liew's, who continued to play to small audiences. He closed on October 19, promising to reopen in the spring and he did so, even offering new players and new plays. The season lasted until

⁸⁵ Whiting, "Theatrical Personalities," 310-311.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 311-312.

September 8, 1858.⁸⁷ The People's Theatre continued to be used until September 8, 1859, when it burned and everything that Van Liew owned was lost.⁸⁸ From 1859 to 1864 St. Paul had no regular professional drama, although during the summers of 1860 and 1861 attempts were made to offer plays.

As the war dragged on, however, some of the former interest revived. In the summer of 1864 the McFarland Dramatic Company presented a number of favorite plays, including *The Colleen Bawn* and *The Octoroon*. The company, consisting of six members, was ranked by the press as "rather average." While there was no professional drama in St. Paul in 1865 there were numerous operatic, minstrel, variety, and amateur programs. In 1866 John Templeton and his troupe offered such productions as *Evadne*, *Fanchon the Cricket*, and *The Lady of Lyons*. Later the Charles Plunkett Dramatic Company arrived with sixteen members, among which were such favorites as J. W. Carter and Susan Denin.⁸⁹

The frontier period of St. Paul's theatrical history came to a definite close with the building of the St. Paul Opera House, which was begun in 1866 and completed in the spring of 1867. This was a large building, said to have cost \$50,000, with limestone walls, lighted with gas, and capable of seating 1200 persons. The A. McFarland Company was the first troupe to offer legitimate drama in the Opera House, paying \$600 per month for the privilege, and offering plays new to the audience—*The Black Crook*, *Ten Nights in the Barroom*, *Our American Cousin*, *The French Spy*, *The Hidden Hand*, and *The Sea of Ice*. The productions were well done but the season was not financially successful.

In 1847, one year after the St. Paul post office had been established, a settlement was begun on the east side of the Falls of St.

⁸⁷ Some plays new to St. Paul were: *As You Like It*, *The Iron Mask*, *King of the Commons*, and *The Huron Chief*. *Mazeppa* ran for a week, as did the novelty production, *The Poor of New York*, or, *The Panic of 1857*.

⁸⁸ Van Liew's bad luck continued after the fire. While going down the Mississippi on a sand barge, the craft sunk and he was left penniless. He was next reported as manager of a burlesque house in Memphis and many years later during the Black Hills gold rush, a "gentleman from St. Paul" ran across this courageous manager in Deadwood Gulch, "gray and grizzled but almost as cheery as in the days when he catered to the elite of St. Paul in the amusement line." *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*, January 22, 1889.

⁸⁹ The Plunkett Dramatic Company was the first to attempt to establish a permanent theatre in St. Paul by playing through the winter. In the winter of 1868-1869 it offered plays with such stars as Marietta Ravel, Susan Denin, and Fanny Morgan Phelps, but by July the manager admitted failure. For the next fourteen years St. Paul depended upon traveling companies for entertainment. Whiting, Notes, 6-8.

Anthony, and two years later the first buildings on the west side were erected. Bridges were later constructed between the two villages, and they were merged into a settlement that was to become the city of Minneapolis. St. Anthony on the east side was recognized as an incorporated town in 1850, and in 1858, when Minnesota came into the union as a state, had a population of some 3500 inhabitants. Minneapolis, on the other side of the falls, at the same time had a population of 1500. While the town of Minneapolis was not incorporated into a city until 1867, it was an even later date, 1872, when the two settlements were officially joined by an act of incorporation. Theatricals were not as numerous in Minneapolis in the early years as in St. Paul, although there were numerous halls and theatres, and some of the dramatic companies that visited this area doubtless played in both towns.

Probably the first hall in Minneapolis to be used for theatrical purposes was Woodman Hall, owned by I. T. Woodman, and erected in 1857.⁹⁰ According to one account, the first theatrical attraction to be presented at Woodman's Hall was the Sallie St. Claire Troupe, which also played in St. Paul in 1857. In 1859 Harmonia Hall was erected. It boasted a proscendium, which gave it some advantage over the "other temples of Thespis" in the frontier settlement.⁹¹ John and Fay Templeton, Alice Vance and numerous other dramatic stars and companies appearing in St. Paul offered short engagements from time to time at Harmonia Hall. The first hall built as a place in which to offer amusement and fitted out with full stage equipment was, apparently, Harrison Hall, which was finished in 1864 and down through 1866 was used on various occasions by theatrical troupes.⁹²

The first real theatre to be erected in Minneapolis was the Pence Opera House,⁹³ located on Second Street and Hennepin Avenue. It

⁹⁰ Central Hall was built in St. Anthony in 1853, but it is doubtful whether it was used in those early years as a theatre. Randolph Edgar, "Early Minneapolis Theatres," *Minnesota History*, IX, 31.

⁹¹ Fletcher's Hall, Boardman's Hall, and a second Woodman's Hall, built after this, were merely community gathering places, with possibly a slightly elevated platform at one end. *Ibid.*, 31-32.

⁹² Isaac Atwater, *History of the City of Minneapolis*, New York, 1893, I, 326; Horace Hudson, *Half Century of Minneapolis*, Minneapolis, 1908, 115; Livia Appel, "Early Drama in Minneapolis," *Minnesota History*, V, 43-44.

⁹³ While the Pence Opera House was in process of construction in the spring of 1867, there was some opposition among certain groups to the building. When it was struck by lightning before its completion with minor damage, a local minister explained from the pulpit that this was an act of God's retribution. A few weeks later when this clergyman's church was struck by a bolt, he made no comment. Edgar, "Early Minneapolis Theatres," 33-35.

was begun as a music hall in the spring of 1867, and was opened and dedicated on June 21, 1867, by a joint concert given by the Minneapolis Musical Union and the St. Paul Musical Society. *The Daily Tribune* made the usual claim that the Opera House was "the largest theatre in the west," and added that it had "as good painting and fresco work as any building in the United States." The part of the building used as a theatre was reached by climbing two flights of stairs. There was a gallery and the main floor was built on a level plane, with removable upholstered settees each seating four persons, and there was also a proscenium with small stage boxes. There were accommodations for about 1400 spectators.⁹⁴

The first dramatic production offered at the Pence Opera House was on June 24, 1867, when Rachel Johnston and J. R. Healy appeared in *The Hunchback*, following this play with a fairly large repertoire including such productions as *East Lynne*, *Leah*, *the Forsaken*, and *Ingomar*. During the summer several dramatic companies presented plays at the Pence Opera House. One of them was Emilie Melville, "vocalist and comedienne," with her troupe of players, among which were George De Vere, Nellie Mortimer, and a Miss Creamer. The company remained for an engagement lasting three weeks, and some of the plays offered were *The Hidden Hand*, *Our American Cousin*, *The Cricket*, *The Comical Countess*, and *Camilla's Husband*. On the last night of the engagement, the company offered a production called *The Black Cook*, and at the same time *The Black Crook* was being offered in St. Paul. It was probably a burlesque, and was advertised as follows:

The Black Crook put to blush by the Great Comic Sensational Extravaganza entitled *The Black Cook*, introducing the renowned Parish Ballet Troupe and Gudger's Transformation Scene.⁹⁵

During the summer the Plunkett Company appeared at the New Theatre. This was apparently its second engagement in Minneapolis during the season of 1867. On the previous visit, the *Tribune* had commented favorably on the company's playing, but had shown considerable irritation at the manner in which the orchestra performed, offering the following advice:

The orchestra should bear in mind that practice makes perfect and a personal application will perhaps enable them to play an accompaniment that will not set one's teeth on edge.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 35-36; Appel, 44-45; *The Minneapolis Daily Tribune*, June 10, 21, 23, 1867.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, July 13, 14, 1867.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, August 23, 1867.

The Plunkett Company presented a broad range of plays, including *The Drunkard*, *Robert Emmett*, *The Pet of the Public*, *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Macbeth*.⁹⁷

Although the Pence Opera House⁹⁸ continued to operate throughout the seventies and eighties, it was supplanted as the town's leading playhouse by the Minneapolis Academy of Music, which was opened on the evening of January 2, 1872, with a joint concert by the St. Paul Musical Society and the Minneapolis Harmonia Society, offered as a benefit for the owner, Joseph Hodges. The Academy was built on the corner of Washington and Hennepin, and like the Pence Theatre was located upstairs. It was larger than the Pence, and housed most of the attractions which came to Minneapolis until the Grand Opera House was opened in 1883, when this theatre took over the lead. The Academy of Music burned on the night of December 25, 1884.⁹⁹

Minneapolis had numerous music and variety theatres. Some of the more popular were the Theatre Comique, erected in 1874, and the Casino Music Hall, Orchestration Hall, and the Park Theatre. The first theatre in Minneapolis to play straight variety bills was the Standard, which was built in 1878 on Washington Avenue North, and was managed for a period of three years by the "notorious" Captain W. W. Brown, when it had the reputation of being somewhat risqué. Like many other western towns—and, in fact, towns all over the United States—Minneapolis had museums, and these usually had stages for the presentation of song and dance and variety acts. Two of the best known museums were Kokl and Middleton's Palace Museum on Washington and Marquette and Exposition Hall on Hennepin Avenue.¹⁰⁰

Germain Quinn, who was a stage mechanic and general utility man at the Pence Opera House in Minneapolis for many years, later serving in the same capacity at the Academy of Music and at the Grand Opera House, has left an account of his experiences. He started his theatrical career by distributing bills for the performances at the Pence and doing odd jobs backstage. Quinn was expected to have as much versatility as the actors. He was basket boy,¹⁰¹ stage

⁹⁷ Edgar, 32-35; Appel, 44-45.

⁹⁸ The name of the Pence Opera House was changed to the Metropolitan Theatre in 1879, to the Criterion in 1880, and to the original name in 1881. Edgar, 36.

⁹⁹ *The Minneapolis Daily Tribune*, December 26, 1884.

¹⁰⁰ Edgar, 36-38.

¹⁰¹ The "basket boy" carried the actors wardrobe to and from the theatre; no stock company was complete without this very necessary person.

door tender, box office boy, assistant advertiser, curtain boy, and assistant janitor, and on one occasion he read the part of one of the actors in *Rosedale* when he was unable to appear because of illness. One of his tasks was to walk downstage and light the footlights after the overture, using a lighted taper. It was far from a pleasant task, as he usually performed this duty amid the "boos and catcalls" of the "gallery gods." Once a rope lasso was thrown toward him from the gallery, which was about eight feet above the main floor, and young Quinn siezed it and drew the man who had thrown it down, for which he was severely reprimanded by the manager.¹⁰² Apparently the same informality and even "rough house" prevailed in the early Minneapolis theatres as could be found in playhouses all over the west.

HAROLD E. BRIGGS and
ERNESTINE BENNETT BRIGGS

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

¹⁰² Germain Quinn, *Fifty Years Backstage; Being the Life Story of a Theatrical Mechanic*, Minneapolis, 1926, 1-10.

The Yakima Campaign of 1856

A fact often forgotten is that the frontier of the United States advanced through country already occupied. True, white men did not stand in the way, but dark-skinned people with no less love of their families, homes and lands contested every encroachment by the whites. The last scenes of these centuries of spoliation were acted out along the Pacific slope, from California to New Caledonia, present day British Columbia. As the first opposition to the colonial Americans had been bitterly intense, so the final phase of Indian resistance was magnificent in its patriotism and bloody in its fierceness.

The fur traders had been in the Pacific Northwest for half a century carrying on trade, lucrative for themselves and beneficial to the Indians if one considers the civilization of the whites a blessing for aborigines. Posts of the Hudson's Bay Company dotted the country west of the Rocky Mountains and with only occasional opposition from indigenous tribes the Company had pursued a policy of strict commercial enterprise without interference in tribal affairs. Indians had come to believe that these whites had no designs on their lands, their hunting or fishing places.

This state of affairs was disrupted by the steady trickle of American emigrants that became a flood before the end of the 1840's. White families simply squatted on land hitherto roamed over by the Indians. The first resistance to the white tide was sporadic, and mostly a private and individual fight.

The Cayuse War of 1847 gave common expression to the accumulated grievances of the tribes in the eastern portions of the present States of Washington and Oregon, and the western part of Idaho. The most celebrated incident of this violent outburst was the massacre of Dr. Marcus Whitman, his wife and twelve others at the Waiilatpu Mission. In obtaining the release of the captives taken by the Cayuses at this time, Peter Skene Ogden was responsible for one of the finest passages in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Oregon Country. He organized a party, packed supplies, and set-off immediately from Vancouver Fort. In one month he had ransomed the prisoners with Hudson's Bay goods, and escorted the terrified women back to Vancouver where they were given calico for new clothes. No bill was ever presented for payment.

It is sufficient, for the purposes of this sketch, to remark that the war against the Cayuse was carried on by 500 volunteers recruited

from the settlers of Oregon and commanded by Colonel Cornelius Gilliam. Actual campaigning was over by September 15, 1848, with the Indians being cowed but unconquered, and maintaining a sullen silence. It was not until June 3, 1850, when the condemned Indian leaders were hanged, that the war was considered as closed.

War's end did not cure the festering complaints of the natives. White men continued to exploit them, to cheat them, to treat them as less than animals. Above all else, white men were still taking their lands. More and more settlers made it ever harder to live the nomadic life to which they were accustomed. They were being hemmed-in, their possessions taken from them without compensation of any kind.

Neighboring tribes began to regret their refusal to join the futile attempt made by the Cayuses to stay "Manifest Destiny." Nothing had been gained by tolerating the whites for more than a decade. Perhaps it was not too late to unite all the Indians and do away with the white plague. Restlessness spread throughout the country. At this juncture three determining, but apparently unconnected events transpired: the Pacific Railroad Survey; discovery of gold in Washington Territory; and Stevens' Treaty Tour.

Washington Territory was created, March 2, 1853. Isaac Ingalls Stevens of Massachusetts, was appointed Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the new Territory. He was also placed in charge of the survey for a northern railway to the Pacific. A party of 243 men, including eleven Army officers and a staff of scientists and artists, left St. Paul, Minnesota in May, 1853.

As the main group worked westward, smaller parties were sent out to explore and map the country. By the time eastern Washington Territory was reached, in September, 1853, the Indians had become intensely interested in knowing why soldiers were in their country. It was explained carefully that a wagon road would be built through the mountains and the tribes would profit greatly from the stream of emigrants who would travel over the thoroughfare. The advent of the soldiers was preceded by stories passed among the Indians to the effect that the whites would give them a few presents and then pretend they had purchased the land. Captain George B. McClellan had to explain over and over again that the soldiers did not desire the Indians' lands. One reason his protestations were received guardedly was the very activity of the surveying parties. It was difficult for the Indians to reconcile McClellan's words with the spectacle of men busily pounding surveyor's pegs into their land. However, not a single unpleasant incident marred the passage

of the party. The Indians were made definitely apprehensive over the final outcome of these systematic scourings of their homeland.

McClellan explained away their immediate fears. He also informed them that Governor Isaac Stevens had power to negotiate for the sale of their lands. This meant that the whites did plan to settle permanently. Moreover, the treaties to be proposed by Stevens would probably cheat the Indians as had those with their blood brothers in Oregon. These simple people did not understand the vagaries of Senate ratification before the United States could fulfill its part of an agreement. They knew perfectly that land had been purchased from the tribes in Oregon, whites had settled the Treaty Lands readily enough; but, the Indians had received no money, no schools, no teachers, no farm implements, nor anything else agreed upon. With such information in their possession one can understand why the Yakimas, Palouses, Klickitats, Cayuses, and Walla Wallas looked askance at McClellan's surveyors and listened somewhat cynically to his sincere words.

December, 1854, saw Governor Stevens begin negotiating for the purchase of land from the Indians west of the Cascade Mountains. The Treaty of Medicine Creek of December 26, with the Nisqually, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Squawksin, S'Homamish, Steh-chass, T'Peeksin, Squiaitl, and Sa-ha-wamish tribes and bands of Indians was the first in a series of agreements that stretched through 1855. A discussion of these treaties and of Stevens' entire Indian policy has no place in these brief remarks, other than to mention that he has enthusiastic defenders and antagonists.

The immediate background for the series of documents to follow, is found in the Treaty with the Yakima, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Nez Perce Tribes, signed on June 9, 1855, at Council Ground, Walla Walla Valley, Washington Territory. The Indians gave up 29,000 square miles of land for which they were to receive annual subsidies and the other usual blandishments held out to them by the Government. It is now certain enough that these tribes signed the treaty only to gain time for the war of extermination which they had determined upon. Later on they explained their duplicity by reminding the whites that treaties were not bi-lateral agreements but clever instruments used by the superior race to despoil the Indian of his lands. It was less than obvious why they shouldn't make use of a treaty for their unexpressed aims, as the whites apparently had done.

Their scheme was to continue gathering supplies of all kinds, including the harvest of 1855, and after the snow was on the ground

and the rivers frozen they would fall on the settlements and kill every white person in the Oregon Country. With the rivers and trails closed,, no help could reach the settlements before the whites had been totally wiped out. This plan was not fantastic. There is no reason for doubting the probable success of the initial onslaught. Fortunately for the settlers, the conspiracy was never put to the acid test by launching the attack as planned.

Indians had feared and protested against the encroachments on their lands. McClellan and his explorers, and Stevens' treaties had convinced them of the white man's determination to take over the Indian country. On the heels of this profound conviction, came the discovery of gold on Pend d'Oreille River. As early as May 26, Angus McDonald, the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Fort Colville reported the news to Chief Factor, Dugald Mactavish at the Company's, Vancouver Fort.¹ Whites, including many undesirables, rushed to the new strike. The trails from the coast, from the east and from the south were suddenly in constant use. Whites came alone, in pairs and in large groups. At the moment when the Indians had determined to annihilate the whites for violating their soil, they found themselves deluged by gold hungry invaders.

In the beginning, the natives adopted a policy of warning the miners not to travel through Indian territory. These warnings were ignored completely, but the swelling stream of whites did not pass unnoticed by the Indians. Soon stragglers and very small parties of miners were ambushed and killed. Kamiakin, Chief of the Yakimas, and moving spirit of the allied tribes, hoped that this would finally prove to the whites the serious intent of the Indians.

Rumors of these slayings filtered back to the settlements, causing indignation and alarm. Finally on September 23, 1855, Andrew J. Bolon, sub-Indian agent for the tribes east of the Cascade Mountains, arrived at the Catholic Mission in the Yakima country to investigate a rumor concerning the recent killing of four miners returning to Seattle over the Cascade Mountains.² Kamiakin was not at the Mission so Bolon contented himself with demanding the surrender of the culprits for trial in an American court. If the Indians refused to comply with his demand, he threatened to return with troops and to fight the tribes until they were crushed. His stay of a few hours at the Mission ended in this violent tone. That

¹ Mactavish to W. G. Smith, Secy of the H. B. C., Vancouver, W. T., 23 June 1855. Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, Beaver House, London.

² Durieu à Richard, Mission des Yakamas, 30 September 1855. Delaney Copies, Archives of the Diocese of Seattle.

same Sunday afternoon he started on his way, planning to reach The Dalles, Oregon, on the next day. He never did. On the trail, he caught up with a party of younger Yakimas. They cut his throat, buried his body, shot and burned his horse. This meant war.

Bolon's long absence had already caused concern among the officials at The Dalles. Their worst fears were fulfilled by news of his murder brought by an Indian woman.

Brevet Major Granville O. Haller, Fourth Infantry, U. S. Army, with 102 fighting men, crossed the Columbia River on October 2, enroute to investigate the report of Bolon's murder.³ At three o'clock in the afternoon of October 6, as the soldiers were descending the Piscoe Mountains, about sixty miles from The Dalles, they met a force of Indians.⁴ The ensuing battle lasted through October 6 and 7. In the night of this second day, Haller managed to escape with his men and began a running fight that lasted through the third day. He retreated to The Dalles, having lost five killed and seventeen wounded, before an enemy force of over a thousand.

Haller's defeat had serious consequences. The tribes that had been wavering in their decision to join Kamiakin's confederation now threw in their lots with the successful warriors. On the other side, Brevet Major Gabriel Rains, commanding the District, ordered all troops into the field against the hostiles.⁵ Furthermore, a citizen's army of volunteers was hastily recruited in Oregon and placed under command of Colonel J. W. Nesmith. These two forces were distinct organizations although they operated jointly during the campaign that now got underway.

Major Rains, with 334 regulars, crossed the Columbia on October 30. A force of 500 mounted volunteers followed in his wake. This very respectable frontier army engaged in one or two skirmishes, captured some Indian horses and had some of theirs captured by the Indians. The troops never succeeded in overtaking enough natives to give battle. One dubiously memorable accomplishment was theirs—the regulars plundered the Catholic Mission, and the volunteers burned it to the ground, November 13, 1855. By No-

³ Granville O. Haller, *The Dismissal of Major Granville O. Haller of the Regular Army, of the United States, by order of the Secretary of War, in Special Orders, No. 331, of July 25th, 1863. Also, A Brief Memoir of his Military Services, and a Few Observations.*, Paterson, N. J., Printed at the Daily Guardian Office, 1863. p. 37.

⁴ Granville O. Haller, *Journal of a scout into the Yakima Country*. MS. Pacific Northwest Collection, University of Washington, Seattle.

⁵ G. J. Rains, Orders No. 17, Fort Vancouver, 9 October 1855. MS Records of United States Army Commands, War Records Division, The National Archives.

vember 25, the troops were back at The Dalles with nothing to show for their efforts except a detestable display of bigotry.

Winter put an end to any campaigning until the spring. Colonel George Wright, commanding the newly organized Ninth U. S. Infantry, reached Fort Vancouver from Fortress Monroe, Virginia, at 11 o'clock p. m. on January 20, 1856.⁶ Quartering the regiment, drilling whenever weather permitted, and preparing for the spring campaign filled the weeks following their arrival.⁷ As soon as the Columbia was free of ice, men and supplies were pushed forward to the base of operations, Fort Dalles, Oregon.

Wright finally crossed the Columbia on March 26, 1856 to hunt down the Indians in the Walla Walla Valley. The invasion lasted less than a day since the Indians had picked March 26 to attack The Cascades on the Columbia. Wright had crossed the river and advanced to Five Mile Creek when an express rider from Major Haller reached him at 10 o'clock p. m. with word of the Indian assault on The Cascades.

The natives had been watching Wright's expedition form and the last word their spies had sent was that the troops would move from The Dalles on March 24. This meant that Wright would have been two days' march into the interior and away from the Columbia by March 26. The Cascades was no ordinary settlement of whites. It was the key link in the river transportation system. Here all freight was unloaded from the boats coming up from Vancouver and Portland, put on the famous wooden-railed, horse drawn railroad to be hauled around the rapids to the Upper Landing, where goods were reloaded onto the small streamers operating on the upper Columbia. Obviously the point was of supreme military importance. If the Indians could hold the portage they could cripple any force of troops campaigning against them.

Nineteen men and one woman were killed, and fourteen wounded in the two days' fight at The Cascades. The hostile Indians did not hold the narrow strip of land because Wright relieved the beleaguered settlement on March 28. Besides Wright, forty Dragoons under Lt. Philip H. Sheridan had rushed up from Vancouver, and a volunteer force from Portland came to the rescue.

Although the Indians failed to hold The Cascades, their daring maneuver did force Wright to delay his advance into the Indian country. After The Cascades were retaken, Wright spent a month

⁶ Wright to Thomas, Fort Vancouver, 21 January 1856, Records of the Headquarters of the Army, Letters Received. War Records Division.

⁷ Captain J. J. Archer to his Mother, Fort Vancouver, 28 January 1856. Archives of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

near the river to make certain no further danger existed in this quarter. This month of forced idleness gave the rivers in the interior adequate time to reach flood stage. As appears from the following letters, swollen streams harassed Wright at every turn and rendered impossible anything like real war against Indians.

Finally on April 28, Wright began the long-planned campaign. The reports show this operation to be one of the most remarkable in the annals of Indian warfare. More walking, talking and less fighting transpired in the next weeks than in any frontier campaign.

This series of reports is notable for its completeness and the light they shed on the difficulties of pursuing a large host of Indians through unknown country. One may follow the day by day progress of a relentless pursuit that fell short of war for lack of an opposing army.

All of these letters are preserved in the Records of United States Army Commands, Letters Received, War Records Division of The National Archives, Washington, D. C. Report No. 22 is in the files of the Office of the Adjutant General, Letters Received. Report No. 10 is also in the files of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs, Miscellaneous Letters Received, Natural Resources Division of The National Archives. Nine of the reports were printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5*, 34th Congress, 3rd Session (Serial Set, No. 876). The complete series of letters is here published for the first time as it was written.

The map of the campaign is in the files of the Chief of Engineers, Cartographic Division of The National Archives.

WILLIAM N. BISCHOFF, S. J.

Gonzaga University.

DOCUMENTS

1.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp "Klikatat" W. T. 25 miles N.E. of Fort Dalles
May 1st, 1856

Sir,

I commenced the crossing of my command at Fort Dalles, on the 28th Ult; and on the 29th at 12M, I moved forward to "8 Mile Creek", where I encamped—On the 30th I marched at 5½ AM, and arrived at this place at 3 PM—I found the trail in very good order; and experienced but little difficulty on the march. By attaching ropes to the Mountain Howitzers, to keep them from upsetting on the side-hills, we managed to get them along without any serious accidents.

It rained very hard yesterday, and our men were thoroughly wet on making camp: the mountains in advance of us appeared to be covered with a deep snow: and I had to muster the troops, and make the monthly returns, hence I determined to halt here today. It is at this point that the trail divides, that of Major Haller going nearly North, and that of Major Rains farther East—The former is much the shortest, but has more snow on it. Early this morning I sent Capt. Russell of the 4th Infy., with the Company of Dragoons, to make an examination of Haller's trail, and ascertain whether or not, I could pass over with the command. Capt. Russell returned at three o'clock this afternoon, and reports the snow about two feet deep; and extending between two and three miles; that there are only two bad places, which can be made practicable for the passage of the Troops, artillery and pack animals, by first crossing with the Dragoons; and possibly requiring the use of the spade.

After mature reflection, I have determined to make the attempt; and shall march at 5 AM to morrow.

On the morning of the 28th Ult; just as I commenced the passage of the river, at Fort Dalles, I was advised, that the Indians had run off all the horses from the encampment of Oregon Volunteers, about five miles from the Dalles. I immediately sent the Dragoons forward to the Volunteer camp, to ascertain the facts in the case, and to pursue, if there was any probability of overtaking the Indians. Lieut. Davidson, on reaching the Volunteer camp, ascertained that they had lost a large number of animals, (reported 350),

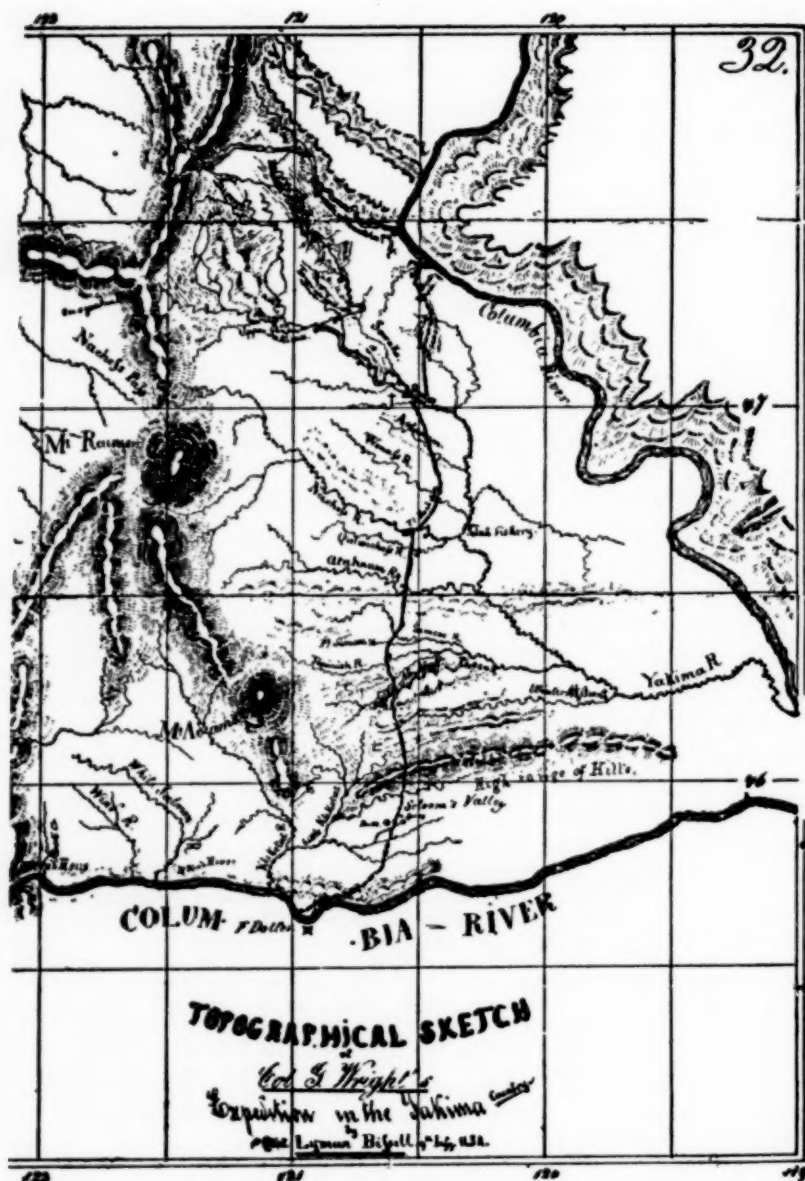
and from the best information to be had, they had already gone beyond his reach. It requires the greatest vigilance, and watchfulness, to guard a large number of animals, and prevent their being stolen by these Indians; who are constantly hovering about us, and awaiting an opportunity. We spare no exertions, by night or day, to insure the safety of our animals; but if we do not lose any during the campaign, I shall consider that we are extremely fortunate.

Capt. D. R. Jones⁹
Asst. Adjt Genl
Head Qrs. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obd Svt
G. WRIGHT⁸
Col. 9th Infy
Commddg

⁸ George Wright was born in Norwich, Vermont, 21 October 1803 and graduated from West Point in 1822. He gained much experience during several tours of duty on the Indian frontier in Wisconsin, Iowa, on the Canadian border, in the Seminole War and in the Mexican War. For gallant service in Mexico he was made Brevet Colonel on 8 September 1847. As the Colonel Commanding, he brought the Ninth Regiment of Infantry to Fort Vancouver in January, 1856. This same year he campaigned against the Indian tribes in eastern Washington Territory. In 1858, with greater success and more fighting, he conquered the hostile Indians of this district. Wright was drowned 30 July 1865 when the *Brother Jonathan* was wrecked off the coast of Southern Oregon. At the time he was enroute to Fort Vancouver to assume command of the Department of the Columbia.

⁹ David Rumph Jones was born in Orangeburg District, South Carolina, 5 April 1825 and graduated from West Point in 1846. The following year he served in the Mexican War. In 1853 he was transferred to the Dept. of the Adjutant General, and served on the Pacific Coast and in St. Louis, Missouri. He resigned from the U. S. Army 15 February 1861. His career as a commander of Confederate troops was varied and brilliant until his death, 15 January 1863.



2.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp 24 miles N. of Camp "Klikatat", W. T.

May 3rd, 1856

Sir,

I marched from Camp "Klikatat" at 5 AM on the 2d inst., as I reported my determination to do, in my communication No. 1 of the 1st inst.

I found the weather cold on approaching the mountains; and our front covered by snow, presented a forbidding aspect; but I knew we could get through, and thereby save a long march by a circuitous route; and besides, I had a still greater object, and if I succeed, I shall be amply repaid for all the hardship endured. This pass is considered as closed up until late in this month, and possibly the Chief Kamiakin, may not be aware of our approach. If such should prove to be the case, our advent in to the valley of the Simcoe, may somewhat disconcert him.¹⁰

But to resume the history of our movement of yesterday the 2d inst. After a severe march of seventeen miles, over mountain trails, and frequently through snow, varying from two to twenty feet in depth; I succeeded in passing all our troops, artillery, baggage and pack train, in safety over the northern slope. Last night it was snowing or hailing most of the time, but encamping on the edge of the forest, our men soon made themselves comfortable. This morning I sent forward the Dragoons, to make a reconnaissance of the country in advance, and with the view of deciding on the trail I would march on. I moved at 8 o'clock, and arrived at this camp at 1 PM.

Thus far we have seen no signs of an enemy. To day at this camp, some indications of horses having been here, are visible; probably several days since.

I shall march early to morrow morning, and expect to reach the Simcoe valley by 12M, unless I encounter the enemy, or should

¹⁰ Kamiakin, principal Chief of the Yakima bands and confederated tribes in the war of 1855-1856. At the close of Colonel Wright's campaign of 1858 in the Spokane country, Kamiakin refused to surrender. He spent a year in British Columbia, two years with the Crow Indians in the buffalo country, and in 1861 returned to his friends among the Palouse Tribe. Here he farmed a small plot and lived in obscurity until his death about 1880.

be diverted from my point of direction in the hopes of striking a blow.

I shall be at the A-tah-nam Mission on the 5th.¹¹

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obed Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Commdg

3.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the A-tah-nam Creek near the
Yakima Mission, W. T.

May 6th, 1856

Sir,

Marching early on the morning of the 4th, I passed over a high range of Mountains, and made a rapid descent into the valley of the To-pinish, and encamped about a mile in advance of the point where the Indians attacked Major Haller—Some signs of the enemy were visible, and in the afternoon, four Indians were discerned at a long distance, on the plain. I sent out parties of Dragoons in different directions, with a view of intercepting the Indians; but they could not succeed. I am very anxious to capture one or two of these Indians, and make them serve as guides to conduct us to their camp.

Yesterday, I marched at 5 AM, crossed the Simcoe at 7, and after passing over a high range of hills descended in to this valley, and encamped at 2 P. M.

We have occasionally seen one or two Indians on horseback, and at a long distance, but on our approach they vanish.

Along this stream and at the Mission, there are no indications of any number of Indians having been living, since last year. I am under the impression that they are most of them, either in their mountain retreats or at the Fisheries. At all events, I think the Fisheries will be the great point of concentration, certainly by the 20th of this month.

This morning I have sent Capt. Russell with the Dragoons, to make an examination of this creek, for a few miles above the Mission: not only to look after the enemy: but what is equally important

¹¹ The Roman Catholic Mission of St. Joseph on the A-tah-nam, founded by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1848 and finally abandoned in 1859.

to me, to see if any timber is to be found within a reasonable distance. All these valleys are entirely destitute of timber. On the water courses there is sufficient for fuel—but none large enough for building—hence it will be very difficult to erect Block houses at the crossings.

To morrow morning I shall march North to the Na-chess cross that river, strike the military road, and proceed to the Fishery, or to the *Pass*, as circumstances may render advisable.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

4.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on "Council Creek" 7 miles North of the
Yakima Mission W. T.

May 8, 1856

Sir,

At 11 O'clock P. M. on the 6th inst, my camp on the A-tah-nam creek was attacked by the Indians, and at the same moment the Prairie was set on fire in two places to windward. The night was dark, and the Indians were not discerned by the Sentinels, until the firing commenced. The Troops were promptly under arms, and Detachments sent forward, but the Indians had fled: parties were also sent out, and after considerable labor subdued the fires on the Prairie. All remained quiet after the alarm, until the beating of reveille at 2½ AM. At the first dawn of day, while we were packing up, preparatory to marching, the Indians appeared in large numbers on the crest of the long range of hills in our front: as soon as practicable, the Troops, were put in march on the trail, which gradually approaches the hills: the Indians at the same time, made a flank movement towards the point where the trail ascends the hills. On reaching a point near the base of the Hills, our Dragoons suddenly deployed, and made a handsome charge at full speed, closely followed by a company of Infantry. The Indians fired one shot, and then fled in every direction—the ground was cut up by ravines, and nearly all covered over with a heavy growth of the Sagebrush.—The Indians on their fleet poneys, accustomed to marching over that

country, very soon gained so much distance, that I arrested the farther pursuit by the Dragoons.

Keeping our baggage and pack train as much concentrated as possible, and strongly guarded, I again moved forward on the trail to this place: the Indians were constantly to be seen on the hills in our front, but retired as we approached. I sent some of our friendly Indians in advance; and they succeeded in holding a talk with the hostiles: they said they did not want to fight. I again sent, and endeavoured to induce some of them to come to me: but they could not be persuaded to trust themselves in my power. They made various excuses; they said there was no Chief with them; and that they were afraid to hold any communication with me, or come into my camp; as they might be blamed for so doing, by their Chiefs—I again moved forward; the Indians retreating slowly as before, keeping just beyond striking distance—On descending into the valley where we are now encamped, the Indians appeared on the hills, on the opposite side of the creek, in large numbers; and some of them came over into the valley: and gradually approached the head of my column, until a talk was commenced with our people. They stated that the Chief Skaloom was on the other side of the creek; that he did not wish to fight: that he wanted me to halt and encamp here, until Kamiakin and the other Chiefs arrived: when they would all come to my camp—I sent back to Skaloom, desiring to see him personally, but he announced that he was not authorized to hold a talk with me; that he was afraid his acts might be disapproved by the Chiefs; that he had sent for Kamiakin and the other Chiefs, to come in as soon as possible.¹² The day was intensely hot, and our men had been under arms since three o'clock in the morning: and I determined to encamp. At 4 P. M. five Indians came over from the opposite bank: they were sent by *Kamiakin* who had just arrived at their camp.

Kamiakin sent word that he will come to my camp as soon as Ow-hi, and the other Chiefs come to him.

Between 4 O'clock and sun set, I received several messages from Kamiakin & Skaloom, expressing the greatest friendship for us, and a very great desire for a permanent peace. They apologized for the attack on our camp at the A-tah-nam, & said it was done by some

¹² Skaloom, or Skloom was Kamiakin's brother. As early as 1854 the Catholic missionary, D'Herbomez, O.M.I., was warning others of the vicious influence Skloom was exercising on the Agent, Andrew J. Bolon. According to D'Herbomez, Skloom duped Bolon into believing the Yakimas were responding to the overtures for peace. D'Herbomez à Brouillet, Attanem, Camp des Yakamas, 28 Aout 1854. Dellanoy Copies, Archives of the Diocese of Seattle.

Indians living in the Mountains beyond their reach. At sunset, when they saw us driving in our animals, and picket them, inside of the chain of Sentinels, as we always do at night: they sent a special express, to say that we could let them run at large during the night. I assured them that I had no fears that any of Kamiakin's people would touch my animals, that I placed firm reliance on the Chief's word, but that it was my practice to picket my animals at night, to keep them from straying off, where we could not find them. Every thing passed off quietly during the night.

It is now 9 o'clock AM.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt Genl
Hd Qr Dept of the Pac.
Benicia, Cal.

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Commg

5.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess river, W. T.

May 9th, 1856

Sir,

After 9 O'clock AM. yesterday, when I closed my communication No. 4, I received several messages from Kamiakin, stating that he was waiting for some of the Chiefs, who had not arrived; and more especially was he awaiting the arrival of Young Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox, son of the Chief who was killed by the Volunteers. Kamiakin intimated that nothing could be done without the presence of this young Chief, who seems, from some cause or other, to have suddenly become the leader, and head, of all the different tribes east of the Cascades. During the night all was quiet, the Indians were on the hills in front of us until after dark. At three o'clock this morning, I broke up my encampment & after crossing the creek, we ascended a high range of hills, on our route to this place. Just after leaving my camp, I received a message from the Chiefs Skalom & Sha-wa-my, proposing an interview. I answered that I could receive them in my camp on the Na-chess this afternoon. On our way over the hills several men came to meet us, and to keep their young men from stealing our animals &c. On approaching this place, quite a number of Indians were seen, but they all retired soon after I established my camp. The river is very high & rapid. At the points of crossing, there are

from 5 to 7 branches of the stream, separated by small islands, thickly covered by willows. After a careful examination of all the fords near here, it was found impossible to cross the men or animals over any of them. To morrow I shall have a reconnaissance made, with a view to ascertain whether we can, during the high water, cross the river at all.

After encamping, I sent a message to say to Skaloom and Sha-wa-my, that I was ready to see them. My messenger crossed the river and went to their encampment, he says that he found them assembled in council; that the Chiefs Kamiakin, Ow-hi, Skalom, Te-i-as & Sha-wa-my were seated in a circle; that the young Chief Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox was in the center, addressing them; that they had angry discussions about the cause of the war, and as to who was to blame; that Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox appeared to take the lead in the discussions, and the greatest deference paid to him by the assembled Chiefs. Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox said that he did not know what reliance to place on the word of the White Chief, who said that his heart was good: that they had been deceived before, and his father lost his life: and finally, he said that he was now a poor man, that he was on foot, had given away all his horses to the Indians between this & Colville, & that he was prepared for a general war during the summer. He said, that neither Skalom or Shawamy, who had sent to me, expressing a desire for a meeting, or any other Chief should come to my camp to day. In a subsequent talk, before my messenger left: Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox somewhat moderated his tone: some of the other Chiefs not exactly appearing to like the air of superiority assumed by the young man.¹³

Kamiakin, did not seem to have much to say, he seems bound to act in accordance with Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox, & to yield to him in every thing. My messenger returned & reported to me; and in a few minutes, two men were sent over to see me with messages from the Chiefs. They are very evidently having angry talks among themselves, and after my messenger left them, were not well satisfied

¹³ Ow-hi, uncle of Kamiakin and father of Qualchen who is generally blamed for the murder of sub-Agent, Andrew J. Bolon. Ow-hi was killed during an attempted escape from Colonel George Wright at the close of the campaign in the Spokane country, September, 1858. Te-i-as, uncle of Kamiakin and also, his father-in-law. Although his stature as a lesser chief of the Yakimas was not great, Te-i-as had the reputation for being consistently friendly to the whites. Sha-wa-my, or Show-a-way, uncle of Kamiakin. Tradition among the Yakimas has it that Kamiakin usurped the power of Show-a-way who as the son of Ki-yi-yah, was legitimate heir to the leadership of the Yakima Nation. Chief Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox, son of the great Chief of the Walla Walla, Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox. Old Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox was shot and shamefully mutilated by the Oregon Mounted Volunteers when he attempted to escape, 7 December 1855.

with what word they sent me, and hence their messenger speedily followed with a conciliatory message to smooth down the first.

I had now determined that the peace negotiations should be brought to a close, and accordingly said to the messenger, "go back to Kamiakin, and say to him, that no messengers of his will be received by me, unless he is desirous of making peace—that all Indians found approaching my camp will be fired upon.

It is now 6 O'clock PM, and since my last message, no Indians have been seen about.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt General
Head Qr. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Ob. Svt.
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

6.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess River, W. T.

May 11th, 1856

Sir,

At sun set on the evening of the 9th, Kamiakin sent to me two men, saying that the assembled Chiefs had at last, all agreed to make peace, and that probably they would come to my camp on the next day. He further sent word that he would send off his young men to their homes. I had no doubt that Kamiakin had sent the message; but I had strong suspicions as to his sincerity, and I increased my precautions for the safety of my camp and animals. The whole of yesterday wore away without any message from the Chiefs. Early yesterday morning a large party was seen crossing the hills on the other side of the river, and moving off North toward the We-nass. Scattering Indians have been seen about the crossing and on the hill top ever since. In the afternoon I sent the Dragoons to make a reconnaissance for a few miles up the river, with a view of ascertaining the practicability of crossing: but they found no place where we could ford—at one point the river might possibly be crossed by ferrying, but we have only two Indian Rubber boats, and there is nothing with which to make a raft. It is at this moment doubtful, whether I shall be able to effect a passage, before the river falls.

Last evening a Klikatat Indian from Kamiakin's camp, came here to see Joe, the Indian I brought with me from Fort Vancouver, he is one of a party of Klikatats, who are desirous of getting away

from the enemy & joining us: but the difficulty is that they cannot get their families off. He says that Skalom & Sha-wa-my are for peace, but that the other Chiefs are all for war. He warned us to be on our guard, and that they would attack our camp either last night or to day. The night passed off quietly, but we see a few Indians on the hill tops.

Finally, I am fully under the impression that we shall have to make a long campaign of it; if beaten at one point, the Indians will retreat North, where they have many very strong positions. I am anxious to establish a Depot, and build a Block house; but have not yet been able to find a place suitable. There is no timber of any kind on any of the streams East of the Cascades. Our large pack train requires a heavy guard, and my force is not sufficient to justify a separation.

I shall send an order by express, for Col. Steptoe to move forward with all the disposable force on the Columbia river, the route is entirely open: and I am in hopes that a force may be early pushed forward from Puget Sound.¹⁴ I am much in want of another troop of Dragoons, and I hope the General will order Capt. Smith to join me.¹⁵

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt Genl
Head Qrs Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Mo. Ob Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

7.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess river, W. T.
May 15th, 1856

Sir,

Since my last communication (No. 6) to Dept. Hd. Qrs., nothing has transpired to change the views I therein expressed. The Indians are mostly collected North of us, and although they are not unanimous in a desire to continue the war, yet I believe they are all willing to engage in it, in the hopes of plunder.

¹⁴ Edward Jenner Steptoe was born in Virginia, 1816, and graduated from West Point in 1837. Served in the Mexican War, and later in New York, Utah and Washington Territory. His resignation from the U. S. Army was tendered, 1 November 1861. He died at Lynchburg, Virginia, 1 April 1865.

¹⁵ Major General John Ellis Wool, commanding General of the Department of the Pacific with Head Quarters at Benicia, California.

It seems that this country has been selected as the great battle field, where all the Indians East of the Cascades, propose to unite and oppose us. Besides the whole Yakima Nation, we have in front of us, DesChutes, John Day, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Palouse & Nesquallys. The Walla Wallas are probably the most unmanageable, Young Pu-Pu-Mox-Mox will never forget the death of his father.¹⁶

I have moved my camp about four miles lower down the river, for better grazing. The river is gradually falling, but not yet fordable at any point: as soon as I can cross, I shall march where the Indians are assembled, and if possible engage them.

We see daily a few Indians on the hills opposite our camp, watching our movements, but we have held no communication with any of them since the 10th.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl
Head Qrs. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obt Srvt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Commdg

8.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess river, W. T.

May 18th, 1856

Sir,

On the 15th inst. the date of my last communication I had a reconnaissance made of this river to its junction with the Yakama; it is not yet fordable at any point; no timber suitable for building is to be found on any of these rivers—good pine timber doubtless abounds in the mountains; but it cannot be floated down the Na-chess, as suggested by Capt. Cram.

I am now in the very heart of the Yakama Country; this river abounds with fish, and is a great resort for the Indians early in the season. This river flows into the Yakama about five miles below this point; hence I am within an hour's ride of all the great fisheries

¹⁶ The Yakimas, Des Chutes, John Day, Umatilla, Walla Walla and Palouse were all members of the Shahaptian Indian linguistic group. In general, these tribes and bands lived in present-day northeastern Oregon, eastern Washington, and western Idaho. The Nesqually were of the Salish group and lived on the southern extension of Puget Sound, Washington, at the mouth of the Nisqually River.

of the Yakamas. But to resume my narrative of occurrences since the 15th.

Towards evening on the 15th, many Indians were discovered crossing the distant hills, and approaching the opposite bank of the river, which at this place is about half a mile wide, intersected by islands covered with a dense growth of willows and cotton wood. After some delay, our friendly Indians learned from three on the other side, that they desired to have a talk, and that some of the Chiefs had arrived, and that all of them would soon reach their camp. Several attempts were made to cross, but the water was too deep and rapid. The Indians said they would again attempt to cross early on the following morning.

On the morning of the 16th, a crossing was effected and I was informed that most of the Chiefs were assembled, and that they were anxious to come and have a talk with me, as soon as they could pass the river. During the forenoon, a few individuals passed to and from the opposite bank. Lt. Van Vorst crossed over, and saw Young Ow-hy, son of the Chief of that name. This young man is of some note, & wields great influence over the young men & warriors of the nation: He came over to my Camp, and talked freely, and appears determined to put a stop to the war. He said that his father was in their camp, and would come and see me, if he could cross the river. Towards evening a large body of Indians approached the river from the North, they paraded on the hill side, and march down in line to the river. Such was the regularity and order of their movement, that it was supposed by some, on first seeing them, that they were mounted troops of our own Army approaching. They proved to be the great Chief Te-i-as & his people. Te-i-as is called the Head Chief of all the Yakima Nation; He has always been friendly to the White people, and all say that whatever Te-i-as agrees to, they will abide by.

The night passed off quietly, and yesterday Ow-hy sent over word that he would come & see me. He was conducted into camp about noon, and although a little timid at first, it soon wore off. He expresses a great wish to stop this war, and a great friendship for the white people. After a long, and very satisfactory talk, he said that he would go over to his camp, and send "Old Te-i-as".

Owhy has the most numerous band of any of these Chiefs, and by attaching him and his people to us, the war party, if they still should hold out, might be very readily subdued. Kamiakin, of whom we have always heard so much, has sunk into comparative insignificance, the Chiefs rarely mention his name, and his influence is pretty much gone.

Last evening, the Old Chief Te-i-as succeeded in crossing over, and came to see me: It will be recollected that Te-i-as has always been the firm and true friend of the white people, and his word is regarded by all as law. After giving him a cordial reception, and assuring him of his perfect safety when in my camp, and also of the great pleasure I felt in taking by hand so celebrated a Chief &c, I restored the confidence of the Old Chief, which seemed at first to be rather shaken. Te-i-as spoke well, he remarked that he was a poor man, that he was not a great Chief, but that he had always been the fast friend of the Whites, and had always exerted his influence to preserve a good understanding between his people and ours. After talking in a subdued strain for some time, the Old Chief prepared to re-cross the river, to have a council with the Chiefs there, Te-i-as gave me to understand distinctly, that whatever he said, they (the other Chiefs) would all agree to.

The river is at a stand, and barely passable by a man on a large horse. It is now 8 AM, and I have not heard anything from the other side this morning.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl
Hd Qr Dept of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obed Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

9.

Head Quarters Norther District¹⁷
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess River, W. T.

May 30th, 1856

Sir,

Since my last communication (No. 8) which I addressed to you on the 18th inst, nothing has occurred to change the position I then occupied in relation to the Indians. The river is now, and has been at all times impassable. The Indians occasionally cross over by swimming their animals, and by this means I collect what news I can, as to their movements and designs.

The salmon have not commenced running, in any numbers, and hence the Indians are compelled to go to the mountains to seek subsistence. It is reported that Kamiakin, has gone over to see some

¹⁷ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

of the Nez Perce Chiefs, who were engaged with him in getting up this war, and is expected back in three days from this time. I believe that most of these Chiefs desire peace: but some of them hold back, in fear of the demands that may be made upon them, for their murders and thefts. They seem to think, and say, that they had strong and good reasons for the murders they have committed, both of the miners and Indian Agent, the outrages of the former, and the injudicious and intemperate threats of the latter, if true, as they say, I doubt not, maddened the Indians to murder them.

Col. Steptoe joined me yesterday with four Compy. his pack train returns immediately to Fort Dalles to bring up supplies escorted by Captain Patterson of the 9th Infy, with his Company.

Exclusive of Detachments with pack trains, I have about five hundred men with me, and as soon as I can cross the river, I shall advance to the We-nass, and the Fisheries, and if I do not bring the Indians to terms either by a battle or by a desire for peace on their part, I shall endeavor to harass them so much, that they will find it impossible to live in this country.

I am now throwing up a field work, of earth and gabions of dimensions sufficient to contain a company or two & all our stores. This Depot will enable me to move unincumbered with a large pack train.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl
Head Qrs Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Commg

10.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess River, W. T.

June 8th, 1856

Sir,

Since my last communication (No. 9) of the 30th Ult^o, I have completed the Fort at this point, and the bridge over the Na-chess will be finished in two days. I shall then advance to the fisheries, and thence to the "Kittitas" Country.

I have now in my camp, a body of "Klikatat" Indians, numbering about 80 in all.¹⁸ These Indians formerly lived in Oregon, but

¹⁸ The Klikatats were a Shahaptian tribe living in south central Washington.

at the treaty last year, Kamiakin demanded that they should be sent to this country, claiming them as a part of his people. They were accordingly sent here by General Palmer. It appears that they have been treated very harshly by Kamiakin, and on my approach, they sought every opportunity of escaping, and joining us. This they found very difficult, as Kamiakin kept a vigilant watch on the women & children—lately a large number have succeeded in reaching my camp, & I will send them all into Fort Dalles, and I have written to the General Superintendent, and suggested the propriety of receiving them back, and locating them on one of the Reservations in Oregon. These "Klikatats" can never live in peace in this country, they are friendly disposed, and only require protection from us. If not sent out of the country, they must be driven to join the war party.

At this moment, the Yakimas, and principal Chiefs, are above the fisheries, in the Kittitas country. They are divided in their councils, and in all probability, when I approach, they may propose a parley. This I cannot consent to, except in their own camp, where they have their women & children. If they are sincere they can have no objections. Kamiakin has thus far been the great obstacle, and I shall not treat him lightly if once he falls into my hands. I have a force sufficient to crush these Indians at once, if I can only bring them to Battle. I shall pursue them, and they must fight or leave the country.

I doubt not that they have spies about, and are fully aware of the near completion of the bridge, and know full well, that I shall then be after them.

My command is perfectly healthy & ready for any emergency.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept of Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Ob. St.
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Commg

11.

Head Quarters Northern District¹⁹
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Na-chess River, W. T.

June 11th, 1856

Sir,

On the 8th inst. a party of Indians, numbering thirty-five men, with a Chief at their head, paid a visit to my camp. These Indians are living high up in the mountains, on the branches of the Na-chess, they do not consider themselves under the authority of any of the Great Chiefs of the Yakima Nation. They have not been engaged in hostilities, and evinced the most friendly disposition.

On the 9th inst, a party of fifteen Indians, with their Chief, from the neighborhood of the Priest's Rapids, came to see me. The Chief presented me a letter from Father Pandosy. It appears that these Indians at the commencement of the war, were living at the A-Tah-nam Mission, and fled immediately to the North. The Chief has numerous testimonials as to his attachment to the white people, and his unwavering fidelity in our cause.

I also received deputations, headed by Chiefs, from several other smaller bands. They have had nothing to do with the war, thus far, and do not wish to be involved in it. Should hostilities continue in the Yakima Country, they doubtless foresee that in all probability, their own country might become the theatre of operations. I have made perfectly satisfactory arrangements with all these Indians.

For several days no signs of Yakima Indians had been seen, everything was quiet, when on the evening of the 8th, two men came to me, from the Chief Ow-hi, saying that himself and other Chiefs, would come in on the next day. These men brought in two horses, belonging to the Volunteer Express, monthly sent over from the Sound. The men remained with us, and on the evening of the 9th Ow-hi, Kamiakin, and Te-i-as, encamped on the opposite side of the river. The Chiefs, all of them sent the most friendly messages, declaring that they would fight no more, and that they were all of one mind, for peace. I answered them, that, if such was the case, they must come and see me. After a while Ow-hi and Te-i-as came over and we had a long talk, about the war, its Origin &c. Ow-hi, related the whole history of the Walla Walla Treaty, and concluded, by saying that the war commenced from that moment, that the

¹⁹ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

Treaty was the cause of all the deaths by fighting since that time. Ow-hi is a very intelligent man, he speaks with great energy, is well acquainted with his subject, and his words carry conviction of truth, to his hearers. I spoke to these Chiefs, asked them, what they had to gain by war, and answered them by enumerating the disasters which must inevitably befall them; their warriors all killed or driven from this country, never to return; their women and children starving to death, far to the North, where the snow never melts. But if peace was restored, they could live happily in their own country, where the rivers & ground offered ample food for their subsistence &c. I was determined to assume toward these Chiefs a tone of high authority, and Power. I said if they all desired peace, they must come to me, and do all that I required of them, that I had a force sufficient to sweep them from the face of the earth; but that I pitied the poor Indian, that I was willing to spare them, to make them happy, provided they would comply with all my demands &c. I have never seen Indians apparently more delighted, than these Chiefs were, they expressed their highest satisfaction with everything I had said to them. We have fixed upon *five* days as the time to be allowed for the Indians all to assemble here, prepared to surrender everything which has been captured or stolen from the white people, and to comply with such other demands as I may then make.

With regard to *Kamiakin*, he did not come over during the conference, on the opposite bank. He sent me the strongest assurance of friendship, and his determination to fight no more; this was confirmed both by Ow-hi and Te-i-as.

I am fully persuaded that all three of the Chiefs are for peace, and I doubt not I shall soon settle everything satisfactorily. But I am in no hurry; they must be made to see, and feel that they are completely in my power, that they are, as I told them, "children in my hands."

I told the two Chiefs to say to *Kamiakin* that if he wished to unite with them and make a peace, he must come to me: if he did not do so, I should regard him as an enemy, and pursue him with my troops. I said to them, that no Indian should be a Chief in this country, without coming to my camp.

Skloom & Shaw-a-my, the two other Chiefs in this country, have crossed the Columbia, and gone to the Palouse country. They probably belong in that country. Their people have remained here, and are incorporated with Ow-hi's band. I think everything bids fair, for an early and satisfactory termination of this war. *Kamiakin*, says but little, is proud, and very jealous of his rights. Heretofore

he has always been friendly to the white people, but habitually distant and reserved in his intercourse with them. I must humble him, and make him feel, that hereafter, his position as Chief can only be maintained by his faithful adherence to our cause.

Rumors have reached me some days previous that Leshi, with a band of Nis-qually Indians was on this side of the Mountains, and I was trying to communicate with him, when I found he had come in without any agency on my part. He came with Ow-hi & Te-i-as. He says he came over with about twenty warriors, with their women & children. He is decidedly for peace. This man Leshi, is connected with Ow-hi's people by marriage, and if peace is made, he is perfectly willing to go wherever I say: either to the Sound, or to remain with Ow-hi. I think he would prefer the latter, and perhaps that would be the best disposition that could be made of him.

After my great labor the bridge over the Na-chess is this day completed. The river is broad, at one point twelve feet deep, and a velocity of 8 or 9 miles an hour. It is made in trestles, and may stand for a long time, but should the water rise very high, the floating logs would much endanger its safety.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl
Head Qrs. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Mo. Obed. Svt.
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Commdg

12.

Head Quarters Northern District²⁰
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Yakima River, W. T. Kittitas Valley.
June 20th, 1856

Sir,

In my last communication, (No. 11) which I had the honor to address to Dept Head Quarters on the 11th inst, I reported the visit of the Chiefs Ow-hi and Te-i-as, and their promise to come in at the expiration of five days. I have no question as to their sincerity and strong desire for peace, and I am at a loss to know the reason of their their failure. However such is the fact, I have not seen any of those Indians since. The Chiefs told me that they had sent a messenger over to the Sound, and they seemed very anxious to hear from

²⁰ Printed in *Senate Executive Document, No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

there, before they came in: but whether they did or not, they were to come in at the expiration of five days.

I now learn from Gov. Stevens, that Ow-hi & Te-i-as, some three months since, made overtures of peace, and desired to pass over into the Sound district; that several messages have passed between them; and that the Governors last message invited them to meet him at a point West of the Cascades.

After the last visit of the Chiefs to my camp I did not relax my labors on the bridge across the Na-chess. The difficulties were greater than I anticipated; after bridging the main stream, a dense undergrowth of six hundred yards had to be cut through, and five or six smaller bridges made. However, on the evening of the 17th the road was opened.

On the morning of the 18th, I crossed the Na-chess, with 8 Comps. (1 Dragoons, 1 Artry, 2 of the 4th Infy, & 4 of the 9th Infy.) 450 rank & file, and marched North over a broken country, nine miles, and encamped on the We-nass. Yesterday morning I marched at sunrise, and still pursuing a northerly course, crossed two ranges of mountains, over a very rocky & steep trail, where the Mountain Howitzer had to be dismounted & packed, and arrived in this valley (17 miles) at 2 P. M. On our march I saw no Indians. To day I have scouting parties out, exploring the country. This is a very fine valley, some twenty miles in diameter, small branches of the Yakima flowing through it. It is almost entirely surrounded by high mountains, some of them now covered with snow.

I have made a personal examination of the Na-chess, to its mouth, from thence up the Yakima, to the fisheries, the military road, & the We-nass river: and I now occupy with my Troops all the great valley.

Major Garnett joined me on the 13th inst. with Compy B & K 9th Infy. I left Bt. Lt. Col. Steptoe with three Comps of the 9th Infy, & a mountain Howitzer, with artillerymen, to occupy "Fort Na-chess" This is an important point—as a depot, and within easy march of the great fisheries.

I do not despair of ultimately inducing these Indians to sue for peace. I believe they really desire it, and I must find out what outside influence is operating to keep them from coming in. I shall probably stay in this valley for several days. This is an unknown region, and I have to feel my way; but when the campaign is over, I hope to present a good sketch of the country.

My men are much in want of some articles of clothing, especially shoes, stockings, & overalls. I pray that the Quarter Master below

may be able to keep a supply on hand. Shoes, particularly those pegged last but a few days, marching on sharp rocks.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qrs. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala.

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obd Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

13.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Upper Yakima River, W. T.

June 25th, 1856

Sir,

On the 23rd inst. I marched from my camp at the "Kittitas", and following the course of the Yakima river for twelve miles, when I reached the lower mountains, and an abundant supply of pine timber. Soon after reaching the woods, my advance guard, fell in with and captured an Indian, from whom I learned that a party of Indians were in advance of us but a short distance, engaged in fishing. The Indian prisoner did not communicate this information, until after I had halted for the night. As soon as possible I moved forward with one half of my command, with the Indian as guide. It was three o'clock and I expected to reach the Indian encampment within an hour, as from the best information to be obtained from the guide, it could not be more than three miles. It proved to be nine miles, and our men already having marched fifteen miles, I could not reach the point until half past five. The guide, on the route, had communicated the additional fact, that the Indians were on the opposite bank of the river. On the march we saw fresh horse tracks, towards their camp, and I know that they were aware of our approach. On reaching the ford, an Indian on the opposite bank, was calling in a loud tone, evidently warning his people to hurry off, as the soldiers were coming. The river at the ford was rapid and deep. The footmen could not cross; the Dragoons passed over, and advanced rapidly for about two miles. When they came to the fishing traps, the Indians had all fled, except one man and one woman, who were captured. It was ascertained that the party was a small one, and not connected in any way with the hostile Indians, and would doubtless have surrendered at once, had a small party only approached them. I then commenced our return march to

camp, which was reached at half past 9 o'clock, our men having marched thirty four miles.

Yesterday I marched at 12 M, ascended the river four miles, and encamped at this place. At this point there is a trail crosses the river, leading north from the mountains to a river which flows into the Columbia.

Kamiakin, Ow-hi & Te-i-as, with their people, are all over the Mountains, on the river above referred to. It is a stream as large as the Yakima and offers a plentiful supply of salmon. The distance from this point, is three days march, over a good trail, except for a short distance, which is very difficult. This is the information obtained from our two Indian prisoners—questioned separately.

I am now preparing to cross the river, and as we have timber at hand, I hope to make the passage, and march to morrow afternoon, or early next morning. I am determined to pursue these Indians, and push them to the last extremity. They are all in a state of great alarm, and have spies out on all the trails, to give them timely warning of our approach. If I do not overtake them, I can destroy their fishing traps, and harass them so much, that I think they will find it to their interest to surrender. They may elude me during this summer, but in the winter, they cannot live in the Mountains. I can grant them no terms now, but an unconditional surrender.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adj. Genl
Hd Qrs. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala.

Very Respectfully
Your Mo. Obed. Svt.
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Commdg

14.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Upper Yakima River, W. T.

July 1st, 1856

Sir,

After my last communication, which I had the honor to address to Department Head Quarters, on the 25th Ult^o. I had a reconnaissance made of the country in advance of my position; and the result was that the trail over the mountains proved to be a bad one, and the distance much greater than I supposed, to the river, on which

the Indians were living. I had already ordered that the supply train from Fort Na-chess, should advance to the "Kittitas", and there halt, until I communicated farther orders; trusting that the direct route from thence, to join me, north of the Mountains, would shorten the distance I had marched, and enable the train to reach me before my supplies were exhausted. Not being able to obtain reliable information, regarding the trail from the "Kittitas", I did not deem it prudent to advance from this point, without a good supply; such as would justify me in pursuing the Indians for eighty or a hundred miles. Should I cross the mountains with a limited supply, and the train not reach me in season; I might possibly have been forced to make a retrograde movement: which would have been regarded by the Indians as a retreat. Accordingly on the 26th, I sent my Quarter Master, with the pack train, to Fort Na-chess; the train will reach here to morrow, when I shall be prepared to march, at once.

Yesterday, at noon, a body of Indians, some sixty in number approached my camp, with a white flag, headed by Father Pandosy; these Indians, are direct from the camp of Kamiakin, Ow-hi & Te-i-as. They represent that a large number, in addition, proposed to accompany them, but that the threats of Kamiakin prevented them. Father Pandosy says that on his arrival at the Indian camp, a week since, Kamiakin was organizing a war party to attack me, on the Kittitas.²¹ This has been the policy of Kamiakin ever since my arrival in this country. To keep alive the war party he uses all the arts of deception and falsehood, that he is master of. But his influence is on the wane; his young men are beginning to fall off. Notwithstanding his pretended anxiety to attack us, they see him constantly retiring before our troops. I must push him to the last extremity, and break the charm. At this moment a messenger has arrived from the Indian camp, stating that Kamiakin has passed the Columbia River, and Ow-hi has accompanied him: the latter, it is reported went only after his family, and would then return to the camp, where Te-i-as was remaining. The peace party now with me, have agreed to go and bring their families all in, and locate at any point I may designate. If they come in, I shall place them not far from Fort Na-chess, where they can procure fish, and subsist

²¹ Reverend Charles Marie Pandosy, Oblate of Mary Immaculate, was the Catholic missionary in the Yakima country. When the Indians fled before Major Gabriel Rains Expedition in November, 1855, Father Pandosy had been taken by the Indians to their northern retreat.

themselves, and at the same time be under the supervision of the Army.

I shall march as soon as practicable, after receiving our supplies.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obed Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Commddg

15.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on Upper Yakima River, W. T.

July 1st, 1856

Sir,

In my communication (No. 12) of the 20th Ult^o, I noticed the fact, that messengers had been passing between Gov. Stevens, and the Chiefs Ow-hi & Te-i-as, commencing some three months since. This information I received from the Governor himself. At my last interview with the Chiefs, Ow-hi & Te-i-as, when they promised to come in at the expiration of five days, they appeared very solicitous about hearing from the Sound, and stated that they expected their messenger within two days. I did not know at that time, that they were in communication with the Governor. Their subsequent failure to comply with their promise, induced me to suppose, that possibly, the news they had received from the Sound was the cause.

Yesterday, the two Indians who brought the message from Gov. Stevens, came in with the peace party; and I called them up, when they gave me the following statement. They say, that the Chiefs Ow-hi & Te-i-as received a message from Gov. Stevens, directing that they, with all their people would pass over to the Sound to have a talk, but the Chiefs determined not to go themselves, but to send these two young men (the messengers); that they went to Olympia, and met the Governor. That after a long conversation about the origin of the war, &c the Governor said to them, go back to Ow-hi & Te-i-as, and say to them, that I wish them to cross the mountains, to the west of the Cascades, and bring with them their families, all their horses & stock of any description. The Indians were desired to cross at the "Snoqualimi" pass, and halt at a prairie on the other side—where the council was to be held. The messengers

replied to the Governor, that it was no use for them to take back such a message, that the place designated for the council was not large enough for one half of their stock and horses, and that the Chiefs and people would not cross over under any circumstances. The messengers being about to depart asked the Governor, if he had any letters to send to me, he replied that he had not, saying, "You did not come from the Troops, go back to the Indian Camp". The messengers state, that they then started on their way back, in a canoe, and were accompanied some distance by Mr. Simmons, the Indian Agent. That Mr. Simmons told them, that it was not necessary for the Indians, all to cross the mountains, that the requirements of the Governor on that point might be regarded as idle talk; that it was only necessary for the Chiefs & some of the leading men to attend the council, when everything could be satisfactorily arranged. He told them to go back and say this to the Chiefs; and further he told them to place their women and children in some place in the mountains, remote from the Troops, and warned them to keep away from my camp, that if caught there I would most assuredly hang them.

The above is the story as the messengers have given it to me. I cannot of course vouch for its authenticity. But whether true or false, the effect on the Chiefs & other Indians was the same. This message was received by the Indians, after my last interview with the Chiefs, and before the expiration of the five days. The result was that they all fled to the mountains.

This double negotiation which has been in progress has exceedingly embarrassed me. It has had its effect upon the Indians, and tended greatly to prolong this war. It is indispensably necessary that the war against these Indians, should be exclusively in the hands of but one individual. Otherwise, we cannot expect a favorable termination of the difficulty.

Some six weeks since I received a communication from Col. Shaw, then in the Sound district, informing me that he had some two hundred mounted men, and by direction of the Governor, proposed to cross the mountains at the Na-chess, for the purpose of co-operating with me. I answered him, that I had a regular force ample for operations in this country, but, that in the event of any unforeseen circumstance requiring it, I would call upon the Governor for troops to be mustered into the service. Notwithstanding this, Col. Shaw & his Mounted Battalion, have been pushed across the

mountains, and when last heard from (unofficially) he was encamped on the We-nass river.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl
Head Qr Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obd Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

16.

Head Quarters Northern District²²
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the We-nat-cha river
Northern Washington Territory

July 7th, 1856

Sir,

On the 3d instant I broke up my camp on the Upper Yakima, near the Snoqualimi pass, forded the river without accident, marched five miles and halted for the night. Marching at sunrise on the 4th, our course lay east of north, following a tributary of the Yakima, until I reached the base of the Mountains. During this days march, the repeated crossing & recrossing the stream, rendered our progress slow, and after marching twelve miles, finding myself at a point where the route deflects from the water course, and takes a direction North, over the Mountains, I encamped for the night.

Resuming our march early on the 5th, we began to experience some of the difficulties, which our Indian guides had enumerated. The mountains are very high, the trail frequently obstructed by masses of fallen trees, which had to be removed by a pioneer party. Again the trail runs along the side of a mountain, with barely room for a single animal, and occasionally the stones & gravel yielding to the pressure, a mule with its pack would roll down the precipice. After marching twelve miles, we encamped in the mountains.

Marching at daylight on the morning of the 6th for the distance of five miles, the trail was far worse than that of the preceding day. However we soon struck a stream, and following its bed and crossing it frequently, at last ascended a high mountain, which overlooks this valley, into which I descended and encamped at 1 P. M.

As I apprehended, the Chiefs who had visited me on the Yakima, came out to meet me; also the Priest Pandosy. They assured me that everything was progressing favorably, and that a large number of

²² Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

Indians with their families, were on the other side of the river, fishing. After I had encamped, the Chiefs and a number of warriors came over to have a talk. They appear to have no fears, and seem willing to do all I may require. They say that they will all go at once, to the Kittitas, if I require it: but they express great apprehension about their subsistence, and would prefer to stay here for a while until they can lay up a good supply of salmon, when they could all go to the Kittitas to winter. I have examined the fishing places south of this, and there are none to compare with this at this season of the year. These Indians have always been in the habit of fishing here, but moving farther south to winter. This river is considered as the northern boundary of the Yakima Country. But few Indians are living north of this point, as far as the British possessions.

If I consent for these Indians to remain here temporarily to fish, I shall require hostages for their good behaviour, and compliance with their promises.

Kamiakin has fled to the Palouse country & Ow-hi has gone beyond the Columbia & in all probability will not attempt to come back before next winter.

I have sent word to the nations beyond the Columbia, that they must not harbor these renegade Chiefs. That if they do, they will suffer for it, as the war may be carried into their country.

The Chief Te-i-as is in my camp, and I shall keep him and his family with me. Although he is brother to Ow-hi, & father-in-law to Kamiakin, he is, and has always been, our good friend.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

17.

Head Quarters Northern District²³
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the Upper Columbia River, W. T.
July 9th, 1856

Sir,

I marched from my camp on the We-nat-cha river, at sunrise this morning. Our route along the right bank of the We-nat-cha was at times almost impracticable, the trail passing over rugged

²³ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

mountains, and but a few inches wide, where a single false step, would precipitate man or beast into the roaring cataract, five hundred feet below. By working at the trail, and then leading each animal very carefully, I succeeded in crossing over the whole command, with baggage, pack train, & three mountain Howitzers, safely, and at three P. M. encamped on the right bank of the Columbia.

Previous to marching I made arrangements for the Indians with their families and baggage to follow immediately in rear of our pack train: with a Company of Infantry & Detachment of Dragoons as rear guard. It was nearly 9 O'clock before all the Indians could get off. They have probably a thousand horses, and extended some five miles. With their women and children, of course they move slow. It is impossible to say at this moment, how many there are in all. I left many to fish & others will cross over by another trail. They were all willing to come with me now, if I said so, but as they desired to remain a short time at the fisheries, I had no objections. My principal object being to carry off the large mass of the Yakima nation, and locate them permanently, and beyond the possibility of their being operated upon by their former Chiefs. Such a large number of these people, as I now have, will not be able, for a while, to subsist independent of aid from the Government. Dispersed over the whole country they can get along very well: but then we should have no hold on them for their good behaviour. They have heretofore had but little intercourse with the white people, and that little has been anything but satisfactory to them. They have mostly kept their women and children remote as possible from our people: and it has been a work of great delicacy and labor, to allay their fears & convince them that I have the power and will, to protect them from insult and injury. Our success in quieting their apprehensions, has exceeded my highest expectations.

During my halt on the We-nat-cha, I was visited by several little parties of Indians, living on streams to the North, and east of the Columbia: most of whom had been in or sent to me, when I was on the Na-chess. These Indians live outside of the Yakima Country, are very friendly to us, and appear very anxious to cultivate a good understanding. I have given them good advice, & told them they should not be molested.

In all my operations recently, the aid I have received from Father Pandosy, has essentially contributed to our success. He has great influence with these Indians, and has exerted himself, both night & day, in bringing matters to their present state.

Kamiakin who plunged these people into war, and was con-

tinually boasting of what he would do, has basely deserted his people, and fled, probably to the Palouse Country. His career on this side of the Columbia is ended. I have two or three good and influential Chiefs with these Indians: a new government must be erected, which will unite all their hearts, and place them in deadly hostility to the refugee Chiefs. This can all be accomplished by the judicious management of the Military Commander who may be left in this quarter.

Capt. D. R. Jones
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Mo. Ob Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comg

18.

Head Quarters Northern District²⁴
Department of the Pacific
Camp on Yakima River Kittitas Valley, W. T.

July 18th, 1856

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 3d inst. and the pleasure of reporting, that notwithstanding the numerous difficulties and embarrassments I have encountered, that the war in this country is closed.

When I last had the honor to address Department Head Quarters, on the 9th inst., I was on the Upper Columbia, at the mouth of the We-nat-cha, en route for this valley. Resuming my march on the morning of the 10th, three days brought me to the Yakima river, and on the 13th I encamped at this place. Since leaving Fort Na-chess, this command has marched one hundred and eighty miles, principally over a rugged, mountainous country, hitherto unknown to us, and deemed impracticable for military operations. But the patient endurance of officers and men, overcame every obstacle. We have penetrated the most remote hiding places of the enemy, and forced him to ask for mercy. Deserted by their Chiefs, and perseveringly pursued by our troops, the Indians had no other course left them but to surrender. I have now about five hundred men women & children at this place, with a much larger number of horses and cattle. These Indians, of their own accord, brought in, and delivered

²⁴ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

up all the horses and mules in their possession, belonging to the Government, about twenty in number. Were it advisable, I could assemble a much larger number of Indians at this place, but the difficulty of subsisting then, makes it necessary to allow them to occupy separate districts of country, where fish and roots can be obtained in abundance. This River affords them but few fish at this season of the year. When the salmon commence their fall run, they will prepare their winter supply. To the people now with me, I am compelled to issue at least two hundred & fifty pounds of flour daily to enable them to get along. Still, I think it better to do this, than to send them far away, beyond my immediate control. Other Indians are constantly coming in. This party is the nucleus, the central point, around which they will all gather in the fall. I have had intercourse with nearly all of the Yakima Nation, and they are fully impressed with the folly of their continuing the war. They have been made to feel the inconvenience of it. So long as Troops simply moved through their country and retired, it had but little effect. The Indians were generally the gainers by it. But a steady advance over their whole country, rendering it necessary to move their families and stock, has had a different effect; and understanding as they do, that the country is to be permanently occupied.

I have examined this country pretty thoroughly, and I am somewhat at a loss to fix upon a position for a permanent Military post. The whole country should be given to the Indians. They require it; they cannot live at any one point for the whole year. The Roots, the Berries, and the fish, make up their principal subsistence: these are all obtained at different places, and different seasons of the year: hence they are frequently changing their abodes, until fall, when they descend from the mountainous districts, and establish themselves in the lower valley for the winter. There is but little timber on the streams, and after the rainy season sets in, early in December, the bottom lands all overflow, and the plains are covered with a deep snow. South from this, the most eligible point for a post, is a short distance beyond the "Topenish", where there is good timber for building, grass and water in abundance. This point is on the southern boundary of the Simcoe Valley, and at the point of intersection of the trails from Fort Dalles, and the Kamash Prairie. The Kamash Prairie, or Lake, it will be recollected, is about thirty miles from the Columbia River, and reached by ascending the Klikatat. It is the habitation of the Klikatats, & it was from that point, came the war party which attacked the people of the Cascades. The point above referred to has the advantage, also, of commanding both

routes to the Columbia, and holding in check the Klikatats, who would not be likely to commit any hostile acts, with a military force in their rear.

The season is rapidly wearing away, and arrangements for the winter must be made as soon as practicable. The Indians during the coming winter must occupy the warm valley, and I would suggest that one Military post of four Companies, would be ample until next Spring.

Maj. W. W. Mackall²⁵
Asst. Adjt Genl.
Head Qrs. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obed. Svt.
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Commg

19.

Head Quarters Northern District²⁶
Department of the Pacific
Camp on Yakima River Kittitas Valley, W. T.

July 18th, 1856

Sir,

Recurring again to your communication of the 3d inst. I would remark, that my letter of the 1st gave you all the information I possessed, in relation to the movements of the Volunteers under Col. Shaw, from Puget Sound. My prompt reply to Col. Shaw's letter, before he commenced his march, declining all aid, and informing him that I had an ample force of regular troops for operations in this Country, led me to presume that the expedition would be abandoned. Subsequently, Col. Shaw crossed the mountains, passed down the We-nass, since which I have heard nothing from him. When in the country I received no message from him whatever.

I have not overlooked, from the first, the evident determination, to co-operate with the Regular forces in bringing this war to a close;

²⁵ William Whann Mackall, born in Maryland and graduated from West Point with Steptoe in the class of 1837. Served against the Seminole Indians in Florida, and in the Mexican War. During 1856 he was on duty in the Department of the Pacific. Mackall resigned from the U. S. Army, 3 July 1861, to enter the service of the Confederate States until the end of the Civil War. His last years were spent on his farm at Fairfax, Virginia, where he died, 19 August 1891.

²⁶ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session*. (Serial Set, No. 876.) Also, in the files of the Office of the Adjutant General, Letters Received, 1856: The National Archives, Washington, D. C.

and I have steadily resisted all advances. My efforts have been retarded, but not defeated, by what was done.

Kamiakin has gone far away, and probably will never again come back. Ow-hi has gone to the upper Columbia, and probably to the Buffalo Country. Old Te-i-as with his family is still over on the Columbia. He is an old man and very timid: but our very good friend: his sons and daughters were very anxious to come with us, but the old man insisted upon keeping them with himself, until he came in.

Before I marched from Fort Na-chess, I sent an Indian to ascertain the whereabouts of the "Klikatats," what they were doing &c. The messenger has returned, & informs me that they are at the Kamash Lake digging roots; that they are desirous of meeting me, and only awaited for me to fix the time and place. I have sent messengers for them to meet me at the Ah-ta-nam Mission on the 25th inst.

Three friendly Indians, belonging to the Cascades, who joined the hostile party in the attack, fled when I re-took that place, and are now with the Klikatats. They must be given up, and additional security for the future good conduct of the whole band.

The Indians who murdered the Agent Bolan, are not here. They have probably fled from the country.

I shall march for the Ah-ta-nam, on the 21st inst, with three Comps, leaving Major Garnett here with four. As a post of observation, this point must be occupied until the Indians move to their winter residence.

With regard to my depot at Fort Dalles, it is, and always has been perfectly safe. When Col. Steptoe left there, he left a Detachment nearly equal to a Company and besides Capt. Jordan had more than one hundred employees at his command. I directed Col. Steptoe, to leave one Company entire, if he deemed it necessary, he reported that the guard he left was ample.

Some time since I received an application from Lieut. Derby, through Captain Winder commanding at the Cascades, for a guard for the party at work on the Military road. I directed Capt. Winder to furnish a small guard, if practicable, from his Company, informing him that it was my design to send an additional Company to that point, at an early date. The occupation of three Block houses by Capt. Winder's company, left him no men to spare for the guard; and I had determined before I received the application of Maj. Bache, with the endorsement of the General, to send down a Company as soon as I returned from my expedition to the North.

On the 16th inst, Bt Major Lugenbeel with Compy "A" 9th Infy, marched from this place, with orders to proceed forthwith to Fort Dalles; the Major to assume command of that Post, and then to detail a Lieut. and seventeen men to occupy the Block house at the Upper Cascades. Capt Winder to occupy the lower Block house, detaching a Lieut. and thirty men to remain constantly encamped with the party under Lt. Derby. The small central Block house, I have ordered to be abandoned, on the representations of Capt. Winder; that it is entirely unnecessary; and that the people living there, keep the party of soldiers drunk all the time. Even his best men cannot be relied upon.

Maj. W. W. Mackall
A. A. G.
Hd Qrs. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Mo. Obed. Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy Commdg

20.

Head Quarters Northern District²⁷
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the A-tah-nam Creek, W. T.

July 25th, 1856

Sir,

On the 21st inst I marched from the "Kittitas" with one Company of Artillery, two of Infantry, and a Det. of Dragoons; leaving Major Garnett with three Comps & a Det of twenty five Dragoons. I brought with me a party of Deschutes Indians, with their families, whom I have permitted to fish at the Columbia River, on the north side, above the Dalles. I also brought a party of Klikatats, with their families; they are to halt on the To-po-nish, a short distance below where the road crosses—they can obtain subsistence by fishing digging roots, &c.

I halted two days at Fort Na-chess, at which place I was visited by a party of Nis-qually Indians, who are temporarily living on the upper waters of the Na-chess. Eight of the principal men came in, the number of men, women and children in their camp, is probably seventy. They are poor, having lost nearly all their horses and property, when they crossed the Mountains last winter. They are very anxious to return to the "Sound," either to the reservation, or any other point which may be decided upon.

At my camp on the "Kittitas" I left Leshi, Nelson and Kitsap,

²⁷ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

with a small party of Nisqually's.²⁸ Leshi is the recognized Chief of these people, including those on the Na-chess. They are all desirous of returning to the Sound, provided they can do so in safety. With regard to the three named, I sometime since received a letter from Gov. Stevens, suggesting that no terms be granted them, but in as much as they came in and departed in security previous to that time, and appeared to be determined to be our friends, I would not take any harsh measures without having proof of their guilt. I can establish nothing against them worthy of death. I have no doubt that they have during the course of the war, committed many murders, at least so we would designate their acts; but they look upon the killing of men, women & children as a legitimate mode of warfare. Even of this I have no evidence. I have written to Col. Casey to ascertain from the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for this Territory, if he will receive all these Nisqually's on the reservation, and guarantee their safety. If the answer is in the affirmative, I will then send these Indians, under a guard, to the nearest Military post, west of the Mountains to be from thence forwarded to the reservation.

Since I have been in this country, I have marched over its entire length and breadth, from the Dalles, north to the We-nat-cha; and all the rivers have been examined from the Mountains to the Columbia River. I have seen all the Indians and they are now living only at points which I have designated, either near Military stations, or higher up on the streams, to enable them to gain a subsistence. They are all at this moment, very happy, and fully convinced that their true policy is to abstain from war and remain forever our friends. I have also dispelled their fear of Kamiakin, who has oppressed and robbed them for many years: and should he ever return to this country, these Indians will all unite against him.

Yesterday morning I left this camp at 3 o'clock, & with a Det. of Dragoons, made a reconnaissance of this creek to its junction with the Yakima, and also up the Yakima &c. It is twelve miles to the Yakima, there is no timber at all on this creek. From the mouth of this creek to the mouth of the Na-chess it is ten miles. The Yakima presents the same appearance throughout; cottonwood and willow in abundance, but no building materials.

²⁸ Leshi, or Leschi, Nisqually Chief and leader of the tribes west of the Cascade Mountains during the Yakima War. He commanded the attack on Seattle, 29 January 1856, that was beaten off by a naval battery on a ship in the harbor at the time. The arrest, detention, trial, condemnation and hanging of Leschi, 19 February 1857, became a bitterly debated issue of the times.

This is the day I fixed upon to meet the "Klikatats" at this point. Our messengers have been gone nine days. If they do not come by to morrow, I shall march on the next day for Kamas Lake.

Maj. W. W. Mackall
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qrs. Dept of the Pacific
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Comg

21.

Head Quarters Northern District²⁹
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the A-tah-nam Creek, W. T.

July 27th, 1856

Sir,

On the afternoon of the 25th inst., the "Klikatats" all came in to my camp, headed by their venerable Chief *Tow-a-tax*, commonly called *Ni-ka-tan-i*. They are direct from the Kamas Lake, and numbered about forty men. I have been in council with them for two days, and their conduct throughout, has given me the highest satisfaction; their promptness in coming in, and the frankness of their speeches and ready compliance with all my demands, assures me, that hereafter we may rely upon their permanent friendship.

The Chief *Ni-ka-tan-i*, and the Sub-Chiefs related the whole affair of the attack at the Cascades. It corresponds with what I have already heard—that Kamiakin had sent a party of Yakimas to Kamas Lake, and commanded that the Klikatats should join them, with their young men, and proceed to the Cascades, communicate with the Cascade Indians, and if practicable gain them over, then availing themselves of the moment when both Steamboats should be there, to burn them, and at the same time make a simultaneous attack on the whole line. Kill all the white inhabitants, and hold possession of the place until Kamiakin should arrive, which he promised to do with a large force, comprising all the Indians in this country, and the borders of the Columbia. They say that the design of Kamiakin was to hold the Cascades permanently. By threats and persuasion Kamiakin induced twenty of the Klikatats to join the Yakimas. The latter numbered thirty. The whole party of fifty then went to the Cascades and held secret meetings with the friendly Indians, gained

²⁹ Printed in *Senate Executive Document No. 5, 34th Congress, 3rd Session.* (Serial Set, No. 876.)

over the Chiefs Chenowith and Bannahan, and then made the attack. It does not appear that there was any Chief with the party attacking at the Cascades.

The Chief Ni-ka-tan-i, says that the Klikatats, have been suffering for a long time, the oppressions of Kamiakin and Ow-hi. They have been forced to give up their horses and women, and suffered every species of maltreatment, without the power to make a successful resistance.

I demanded of these Indians, the immediate surrender of three Cascade Indians, who fled with the Klikatats, at the time I recovered that line. They were promptly brought in and delivered to my custody. After a minute and careful examination of their cases, I can find nothing against them worthy of punishment. Their own story corroborated by many witnesses, satisfies me that they did not engage in the murders. That they fled, is true, but the defection of their Chiefs led them to believe that if taken by us, they would all be hung. It is proved by the concurrent testimony of all these Indians that the Cascade Chiefs Chenowith, & Bannahan, set fire to their own houses, with the view of making us believe that the enemy had done it. I next demanded the restitution of all property in their possession belonging to the white people; that they should live at the places I should designate; not roam over the country without authority; promise inviolable friendship towards the white people; and to oppose with all their forces, any attempt of the refugee Chiefs, to disturb the quiet of the country; & finally, to deliver hostages to me, to insure a faithful compliance with their agreement. These conditions were all instantly and cheerfully complied with.

When I came away from my camp on the Kittitas, I brought with me about one hundred Klikatats, who had been for some time kept with the Yakimas. I have now re-united them with these from Kamas Lake, and over the whole of them, placed Chief Ni-ka-tan-i and five sub-chiefs.

The main body of these Indians will live at the Kamas Lake during the summer. In the winter they will move down on the Klikatat river, where there is but little snow. Another party I have located in the valley of the To-po-nish, below where the road from the Dalles passes.

Soon after I arrived in this country, quite a party of Klikatats, escaped from Kamiakin's people, and came to my camp. They were anxious to go back to Oregon, where they had lived before the Treaty: and in the then unsettled state of the country, I had no place

to put them in safety. Accordingly, I permitted them to go to the Dalles. They will now be brought back and incorporated with their own people. The Klikatats at Fort Vancouver, will also join the Head Chief at Kamas Lake. By this, the whole Klikatat nation will be re-united, and I have the strongest faith in the friendship of the Chiefs & people. I will guarantee that they will be on our side, in any war we may be engaged in.

Maj. W. W. Mackall
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Hd Qr. Dept of the Pac.
Benicia
Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obedt Svt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Comg

22.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on the To-pon-ish Creek, W. T.

August 3rd, 1856

Major:

On the 29th ultimo I marched from the A-tah-num to this place; and since that time I have carefully examined the Simcoe Valley; and I have come to the conclusion that my present position, is the most desirable one for Station for the Winter.

In front of us is an open plain to the Yakima River, and both up and down that River, there is a good trail over a level country; one leading to the Selah & Kittetas, and the other in the direction of the Walla-Walla. On the To-pon-ish, there is Oak and Cottonwood; and at a distance of four miles West of us, there is an abundant supply of the best of pine timber accessible with wagons.

This valley is much warmer in Winter, than any of those farther North, and the Indians now at the Kittetas and on the Yakima, Naches &c will all winter here. This is a central point: The Roads from the Dalles, Kamas Lake, and from the North, all unite here; and also from Walla-walla. The Simcoe Valley is extensive; affording grass for our animals and sufficient good land for gardening.

The Express has just arrived from the Camp on the Yakima, *four* Companies are there under Bvt. Major Haller, and everything was quiet.

I have received your communication of the 19th ultimo and I shall carry out the instructions of the General, as soon as practicable.

I have abandoned the Camp on the Na-chess, and ordered Col. Steptoe with his command to this place.

The Company of Dragoons will proceed to Fort Dalles to escort the supply train to Walla-Walla, and after its departure the Infantry Companies will march from this point, direct for Walla-Walla, to reach there at the same time as the train.

Supplies are now coming up to enable the Troops here to begin at once to build huts for the Winter.

It is out of the question to confine the Indians in this Country to a certain District unless the Government furnish their entire subsistence. The whole country between the Cascade Mountains and the Columbia River, should be given to the Indians, it is not necessary to the white people. The Indians can subsist themselves if they have it; the mountains, the plains & the rivers each in turn affords them food. In the Winter they are compelled to live in the Valley; and one Strong Military Post will ensure their good behaviour.

Major W. W. Mackall
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Hd. Qrs. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala.

Very respectfully
Yr most obed. Servt
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9th Infy
Comdg

23.

Head Quarters Northern District
Department of the Pacific
Camp on To-po-nish Creek, W. T.

August 6th, 1856

Sir,

Inclosed herewith you will receive two communications from Major Lugenbeel, commanding at Fort Dalles, and one from Major Haller commanding at the Camp on the Yakima.

All is quiet in this country, and everything bears the aspect of peace. I shall lose no time in establishing a post in the Walla Walla Country; and I hope that the presence of regular troops in that district will prevent any further hostilities. Our pack train reached here on the 3d, bringing up twenty thousand rations of subsistence, and a small supply of tools for erecting temporary quarters at, or near, this point.

We had brought up, also, two pair of wagon wheels, no great difficulty was encountered on the way.

The post of Fort Dalles, is at present without a medical officer. I was obliged to call Asst. Surgeon Brown, temporarily from that station, for duty in the field. Asst. Surg. Randolph is at the Camp on the Yakima, and I must send him with the Walla Walla Command. It is indispensably necessary that, at least one, additional medical officer, be sent here.

Maj. W. W. Mackall
Asst. Adjt. Genl.
Head Qr. Dept. of the Pacific
Benicia, Cala

Very Respectfully
Your Most Obed St
G. WRIGHT
Col. 9 Infy
Comg

Jean Delanglez--In Memoriam

Many expressions of regret have been received by Loyola University and the Institute of Jesuit History over the departure from this life of Father Jean Delanglez, S.J. Historians, geographers, cartographers, and anthropologists of France, Canada, and the Mississippi Valley feel the loss to research of a capable scholar. Few were aware that for the past fifteen years Father Delanglez was hurrying through a lifetime of production, conscious during each of the days of the suddenness with which death might strike him, conscious, too, of the vast labor still before him. In his world of documents he worked without fear of his life's end, but with a feeling of annoyance that it would arrive before he was half finished with the research at hand. In these years he suffered eight major coronary attacks, yet it was a cerebral hemorrhage which proved fatal. He was stricken late in the night of May 8, and did not regain consciousness until his death the following afternoon at five-fifteen, in Mercy Hospital, Chicago, despite the efforts of the Pulmotor squad and consulting physicians. Funeral services were held in St. Ignatius Church at ten o'clock in the morning of May 11, and the interment was in All Saints Cemetery.

Born in Mouscron, Belgium, thirty miles northeast of Lille, France, on January 14, 1896, Jean Delanglez received his elementary and secondary education there in the Collège de Notre Dame until 1914. The first surge of the German armies of World War I carried seven miles beyond his town to the French border and there dug in, thus making Mouscron an occupied zone during the entire war. After studying sporadically during the Allies' shellings young Delanglez finished his college training at Florennes in 1920 at the Collège de St. Jean Berchmans. There he did some teaching for a year while preparing to enter a seminary. Given his choice of seminaries and lands for his future life he decided to become a Jesuit. He entered the novitiate of the New Orleans Province of the Society of Jesus at Macon, Georgia, August 31, 1921.

In the Society he completed his novitiate in 1923, made his vows, and was sent to Grand Coteau, Louisiana, for a year's review of his college studies. From 1924 to 1927 he followed the customary philosophy courses of the Jesuits toward the Master of Arts degree at Mount St. Michael's outside of Spokane, Washington. A year of regency in history and the classics at Spring Hill College, Alabama, was his next task. From there he was sent to Dublin in 1928

for his theological studies at Milltown Park. He was ordained to the priesthood July 31, 1931. He completed his fourth year of theology at Milltown Park and at Berchmankolleg, Munich.

Father Delanglez began his doctoral studies in history at The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., in the autumn of 1932. It was his good fortune to have the eminent Dr. Peter Guilday as one of his professors and director of research. The doctorate was conferred upon him June 9, 1935. His dissertation, *The French Jesuits in Lower Louisiana, 1700-1763*, (New Orleans, 1935), was the first of his books. After his studies he was sent to Port Townsend, Washington, to undergo the third year of probation, the tertianship of the Jesuit course of training. Toward the end of this period in the Lent of 1936 he suffered his first severe heart attack.

Partly because of his heart condition and partly because of his scholarly bent, he was assigned by his superior in New Orleans to full-time research in the Institute of Jesuit History at Loyola University, Chicago. Excepting one term spent in conducting a seminar he did no teaching nor ministerial work. Nor was he fitted by temperament to teach or preach.

Arriving in Chicago in the Autumn of 1936 he discussed his plans for research with the director of the Institute. Father Delanglez proposed to exploit the mission history of the Jesuits in the Amazon Valley, feeling that enough had been done on the French missions of the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes region. The director, with ulterior aims, prodded Father Delanglez with the question: "Why did La Salle miss the mouth of the Mississippi and settle at Matagorda Bay?" Father Delanglez's first thought was that La Salle was lost, but within a few days the director knew that the casual shaft had gone home. The scholar set himself to answering the irritating question. Thereafter, he found more than sufficient material to keep his mind on the Mississippi rather than the Amazon.

While gathering his documents on La Salle he quickly developed some enthusiastic "hates." Discovering how Pierre Margry had foisted falsified and mutilated documents upon Francis Parkman, Father Delanglez's indignation at Margry became almost apoplectic. His disillusionment about one block of sources led him to question all of the documentary materials pertaining to the French regime in America and all of the secondary writings. He saw how vast an amount of spade work would be necessary before the definite history could be written. He set himself to a critical analysis of every scrap of evidence. He hated untruthfulness and focussed his

indignation on such notable characters as La Salle, Bernou, the Jansenist coterie in Paris, Jean Cavelier, Hennepin, Frontenac, Cadillac, and less known writers and cartographers. He considered each historical mistake a personal affront. Indeed, his ire over some historical miscreancy at times verged on the epic. Little wonder was it that his writings were sharp when he had the truth on such a high pedestal. Few know how often this editor's jaundiced eye eliminated choice expletives from Father Delanglez's copy to soften the blasts at some long departed scribe.

His hours among the historical treasures of The Newberry Library were many and profitable. Very soon Dr. Ruth Butler and Mr. Utey recognized him as the "hypothetical reader." For years the Newberry custodians had been purchasing books and documents, excusing their expenditures on the grounds that "some day, someone may need these." Father Delanglez used the purchases widely, and owed a debt of gratitude to the staff of the Newberry for constant assistance and courtesies. As the years passed, he called upon many archivists in the United States, Europe, and especially in Canada, who aided in completing his file of documents. He visited many archives and libraries, carrying with him his photographic equipment, hand made by one of his brethren and of necessity fool-proof, since anything like a tool or mechanical contrivance baffled him completely.

As a linguist Father Delanglez had few peers. He had the rare gift of learning strange languages. He acquired a good knowledge of Russian in two months. Arabic seems to have taken him more time, but this he studied more in detail with a view to study of the Arabian cartographers, mathematicians, and astronomers. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were necessary for his philosophy and theology courses. He was quite at home with French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. He found the English more difficult to compose, and his writings indicated his inclination to anglicize words from one or other of the many languages running through his mind. He made no pretence at a polished style or at rewriting passages, chiefly because his time was short and he was concerned with finding and presenting the raw facts as quickly and as accurately as possible. He wrote for scholars only, with no thought of the palate of a popular audience. He allowed no *Roger's Thesaurus* or other aid to waste his time.

His industry was as immense as his love of history. He was his own typist, photographer, and proof-reader. Box upon box of notes reveal his enormous amount of reading. These notes are to

The story is well told in its salient outlines and will interest the casual reader. The student will welcome this labor-saving treasury of pictorial data of early society in the midwest.

WILLIAM STETSON MERRILL

* * * *

The title page of a very worthwhile book just published is quite simple: *Alfred Tennyson* by his grandson Charles Tennyson, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1949. Opposite is a restful picture of the great poet, one of a dozen choice illustrations in the nearly six hundred pages of the volume. The printing and editing through an exceptionally long index are excellent. The chapter headings are the years, and there are sixty five chapters divided into three parts. In such surroundings Sir Charles B. L. Tennyson places all of the available details of the life of his grandfather.

In 1897, Hallam, Lord Tennyson, son of the poet, brought out what has been considered a comprehensive biography of his father. Charles Tennyson now considers that after fifty years the life story should be rewritten, since the former work, designedly an official memoir, omitted much of the poet's early life, and since Lounsbury did not finish his project. Moreover, innumerable additional materials have come to light during the intervening years, which have not been assembled between two covers of a book. The author has consulted the plentiful writings about his grandfather and has gathered by letter or personal conferences all of the interesting and uninteresting data, reminiscences, letters, critiques, and interpretations, whether published or unpublished. These are quoted throughout the book, but without either footnotes, which would have added too much bulk, or bibliography.

The purpose of the author is amply achieved, in a style literary but accurate, as one might anticipate from the pen of the mature barrister. No one will question the honesty or the authority of the writer. Scholars may, of course, regret the absence of exact footnote citations, documentary calendaring and criticism of sources, but less exacting readers will be happy to have the volume in its present form as an authoritative contribution. Librarians will do well to place it on their list of needs for reading and reference, even at the price of seven and a half dollars.

The first American edition of *A Popular History of the Catholic Church*, by Philip Hughes, has recently been printed by Macmillan. The text runs to 269 pages and is followed by the chronological tables and index. The first six chapters are somewhat of a digest of Father Hughes volumes entitled *A History of the Church*. For nearly two years this *Popular History* has found a general reading public in the British Isles and now it is presented to the Americans. It quite achieves its purpose of being a readable and servicable story of the development of Christianity from its origins to 1947.

J. V. J.

* * * *

To combine the writing of verse with history is no mean accomplishment, but it has been carried off with uncommon success in the volume: *A Cycle of the West*, by John G. Neihardt, (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1949.) In 656 pages of superior verse Mr. Neihardt recounts in stately measures the story of westward expansion. "The Song of Three Friends" is the Ashley fur brigade relived in poetry; Hugh Glass and his celebrated crawl from Grand River to Fort Kiowa is perpetuated in "The Song of Hugh Glass"; much of the courage, resourcefulness and incredible sufferings of the early traders comes to life in "The Song of Jed Smith." One of the best in this *Cycle* is "The Song of the Indian Wars." The poet manages to say much in a few lines when he has a Cheyenne chieftain remark to white soldiers:

"Your talk is sweet today. So ever
Speak the white men when they know their hands are weak
That itch to steal. But once your soldiers pitch
Their teepees yonder, will the same hands itch
The less for being stronger? . . ."

"The Song of the Messiah" is the least interesting of the poems. Yet even this merits attention for its passages on the Indian heroes of the plains, Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull.

No one will read *A Cycle of the West* to learn the history of that region from the Mississippi to the Pacific but anyone with more than passing acquaintance with the known facts will read these *Songs* with pleasure.

Mr. Neihardt's five songs published separately over a period of twenty-six years, 1915 to 1941, are now issued together in their

correct sequence for the first time. Doubtless this fact explains the peculiar format of the book with its varied kinds of type. With a wary eye on a limited sale, the publishers apparently have done little more than bind together reprints made from the original plates. The result is not felicitous, although the end map added to this edition is a distinct help and improvement.

Any student or collector of Western Americana will want this book for its novelty and the periodic flashes of insight into the spirit of the frontier. He will not read the book at one sitting because it does not lend itself to such concentration. Rather, will this volume be a constant companion for occasional pleasant hours spent in the past.

W. N. BISCHOFF